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EVENT AS THE PROMOTIONAL  
TOOL OF PLACE MARKETING  
Mikkeli

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## DESCRIPTION

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<b>Abstract</b>  <p>This thesis presents two concepts – place marketing and event marketing. Theoretical knowledge within these concepts is not widely spread, and they are usually examined separately but not together. A lot of companies use event marketing in order to promote their products or services. But what about cities? Can they use events in order to attract more tourists, residents, investors and industries? Can the event be one of the tools for communicating a city image?</p> <p>Year by year Finnish cities become more and more popular among Russian tourists, investors, universities and employees. Mikkeli is among these cities. But it needs to increase its awareness among Russians and find new ways of attracting them. Event can be one of these ways.</p> <p>Quantitative research with participation of 524 respondents was used in this thesis. Based on the results of the survey, the audience awareness about Mikkeli is not very good. Only about 30% of the respondents have ever been in Mikkeli, and it is about 42% of those who travel to Finland. About 35% of the respondents have heard about this city but have never been there and about 35% have never heard about it. This clearly guide that Mikkeli should increase its awareness among the potential Russian tourists, refresh and improve its image, build effective image for visitors.</p> <p>The present study examines cultural events as a tool for building a better image and increasing awareness of the city. According to the findings, there is a demand for cultural events among Russian people. Mikkeli can use this fact and organize cultural events in order to attract more tourists. There are a lot of examples when events had increased city's awareness and popularity. And this thesis has proven that it also can be done in Mikkeli. Event can be a good promotional tool of place marketing in Mikkeli.</p> <p>The purpose of this thesis is to get better understanding of place marketing; how events are used as a promotional tool of place marketing; and, based on the developed theoretical framework, to evaluate the value of place marketing practices to position Mikkeli more favorably compared to its rivals, to probe the interests of the potential Russian customers and find the ways of how to attract them to visit and participate in Mikkeli events.</p>			
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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter aims to give a background to the area of research. It will also present problem discussion, as well as overall purpose and research questions of this study.

### **1.1 Background**

In today's fast-growing world, the number of cities, regions and countries, which are competing for the attention of buyers, is over whelming. Europe has over 100000 communities competing for resources, visitors, conventions, businesses and talented residents. For a long time, places could just promote their existing place package. Today, the place product needs to be changed and developed according to the target audience needs and aspirations. Places, as well as goods and services, need skilful marketing. (Kotler [referred 29.03.2011]; Rainisto. [referred 29.03.2011]).

Place marketing is a market-oriented, coordinated set of activities to improve the real quality of a city and to efficiently communicate the quality to target audience. Marketing of places requires a deep understanding of how place buyers make their place decisions. With this understanding, place sellers can take the necessary steps and tools to compete aggressively for the place buyers. Event can be one of these tools for building an attractive image of the place. (ibid).

### **1.2 Problem discussion**

There are two concepts: place marketing and event marketing. There is some literature that examines these concepts separately but not together. A lot of companies use event marketing in order to promote their products or services. What about cities? Can they use events in order to attract more tourists, residents, investors and industries?

In this study I want to pay attention to the events as a promotional tool of place marketing and to interweave these two concepts: event marketing and place marketing.

### **1.3 Overall Purpose**

Based on the problem discussion above, the purpose of this thesis is to get better understanding of place marketing; how events are used as a promotional tool of place marketing; and, based on the developed theoretical framework, to evaluate the value of place marketing practices to position Mikkeli more favorably compared to its rivals, to probe the interests of the potential Russian customers and find the ways of how to attract them to visit and participate in Mikkeli events. In order to reach the goal set in the overall purpose, the below research questions have been formed.

The first research question is:

- 1. What can be done for building a more attractive image for Mikkeli?**

The second research question is:

- 2. What kind of value could events have in the place marketing of Mikkeli?**

And the second research question is further divided into two sub-questions:

- a) What kind of demand can be found for the Mikkeli cultural events in Saint-Petersburg, Vyborg and Leningrad area?**
- b) Which marketing communication channels can be proposed for promoting Mikkeli event in Saint-Petersburg, Vyborg and Leningrad area?**

This chapter has covered a background to the area of the research and defined the overall purpose and research questions of this study. Next chapter will review literature and theories related to the research questions.

## **2 PLACE AND EVENT MARKETING**

This chapter will review the literature and theories related to the research questions stated in the chapter one, starting with the designing the Place's image followed by Event definition and its promotion as a tool of Place Marketing. This will lead to the empirical part of this thesis.

### **2.1 Building of the place image**

This section will view the information referred to the first research question. Here I will examine the image of the place, methods for its measuring, and its formation. I will review the literature related to the Place Marketing, discuss the main tools that are available for communicating an image, its own rules and possibilities.

#### **2.1.1 What does determine the image of the place?**

Kotler et al. (1993, 127-128) define the image of the place as the sum of ideas, beliefs, and impressions that someone has of a place. He thinks that the image is more than a simple belief; it is a simplification of numerous associations relative to a place. Boulding (1956) takes a similar view and defines an image as a sum of several components:

- cognitive (what one knows about a place);
- affective (how one feels about a certain place);
- evaluative (how one evaluates the place or its residents);
- behavioral (whether one considers visiting/ immigrating to/working in/investing in a certain place).

Elizur (1987) offered more common definition, stating that it is a sum of all characteristics that come to mind when somebody thinks of the specific place. For example, the belief, that Sicily is a place of Mafia, is only one element of its whole large image. Other elements include that Sicily is a beauty spot, that it is warm most of the year and that this place has unique culinary tradition. An image includes a whole set of beliefs. (Kotler et al.1993, 128). The same is with the brand association. Brand association is



anything that is deep seated in people's mind about the brand. (Brand association. [referred 05.04.2011]).

On other hand, it doesn't mean that people's perception of the place shows their attitudes towards that place, how they view the place in an evaluative way. Two persons may have the same image of Sicily that it has warm climate, but yet have different attitudes towards Sicily because of not the same stand of warm climates. Also, different people can have different images of the same place. One can see the particular town as a place where he spent his childhood; another person can see it as a bustling place or a good opportunity to spend his or her weekend. For the third person it is a gloomy and boring city. It depends on whom you ask. (Kotler et al.1993, 128).

It is similarly with the answers of three stonemasons on the question what they were doing with the stone. The first stonemason answered: "I am doing stabs", the second answered: "I am building the cathedral" and the third told: "I am glorifying the God". Thus, the place must develop the strategy and have capability to create not only stabs but to build "the cathedral" which will be visible to the sellers of the places and to its buyers. (Akkaya 2005, 205-206).

Image is of a big interest to marketers, who always ask themselves: Which brand image do we have? How can we identify, measure and control it in order to attract more customers to our products? What do customers think about our products relative to the products of our competitors? How should we position our products, company, town, etc.? All these questions should also be of interest to the place marketers. They must examine image as a main influence on a buyer's choice. (Akkaya 2005, 205-206; Ries & Trout 2001, 6-9). Those who wish to go somewhere for vocations will more likely choose Greece than Turkey if the Greece's image is more positive and better (Kotler et al. 1993, 129). Eventually, when the firm, company or business is built in the particular place, this place becomes an element of its image in the eyes of the customers. For example, Rolex and Geneva, Chanel and Paris are inseparable in the people's minds. (Akkaya 2005, 206).

Different destinations can market themselves in different ways. Strategic image management is the most recommended way of running a successful campaign. (Avraham

& Ketter 2008, 48). It is a continuous process of researching a place's image among target populations, clarifying its advantages, examining the factors influencing its image and making changes over the years, handling image-related crises and delivering relevant messages to different audiences.(Kotler et al. 1993, 129). The main advantage of this strategy is that involvement of many different people in the marketing campaign requires coordination in planning, implementing and following the marketing program. Dealing with potential investors, tourists or entrepreneurs is an ongoing process that does not end with securing a one-time investment or establishing a single tourist attraction. (Avraham & Ketter 2008, 48-49).

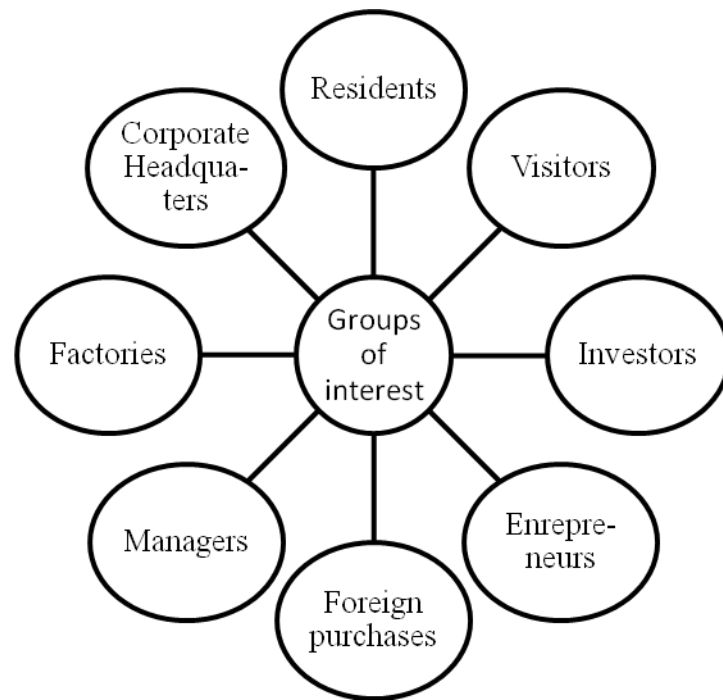
Image construction is a complicated process, and several strategies have to be implemented: the place's uniqueness has to be identified, positioned and marketed in the way that reflects what is unique about this place and how is different from competing places. The campaign shouldn't try to cover too many target audiences; it should have a succinct, consistent message. Every agreed step should be followed, and such components as advertising, PR, promotion and direct marketing should be well coordinated. (ibid).

### **2.1.2 Methods for measuring the image of the place**

According to Kotler et al. (1993, 129), planners use two-step process to measure the image of the place: 1) They select a target audience; 2) They measure the audience's perceptions relevant attributes.

#### Selecting an audience.

Defining the target audience carefully is necessary before launching a campaign, because different groups require different campaigns (Avraham & Ketter 2008, 53). Akkaya (2005, 208-209) and Kotler et al. (1993, 129) defined broad groups that might be interested in visiting, living, working, or investing in the particular place and they may have different images of it. These groups are presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Groups of interest in Place Marketing** (Adapted from Akkaya 2005, 208-209; Kotler et al.1993, 129).

Places may want to increase the number of tourists and business visitors, or attract new residents, entrepreneurs or any other of these groups. In any case, they need to know the images these groups have of this destination, what they think about the place. Understanding of what potential target audience think is the strategic information in the marketing place. (ibid).

Targeting particular audience groups is required to avoid the problem of inconsistent or unstable images. After segmentation of the overall audience and selection of the groups of interest, the key task is to define the attributes a specific target group uses to profile the place. (Kotler et al. 1993, 131).

#### Measuring the Audience's Image.

There are a lot of methods that are used to measure an image. Kotler et al. (1993, 210) describes three of them – familiarity-favorability, semantic differential and evaluative maps. Table 1 gives brief description of these methods.

**Table 1. Methods for measuring an image** (Adapted from Kotler et al.1993, 210).

<u>Method</u>	<u>Brief description</u>
Familiarity-favorability	Initially, they establish how familiar the target group is with the destination. They have to choose one of the following: never heard of; heard of; know a fair amount; or know very well. It describes awareness of the target audience about the place. Then, respondents, who somehow are familiar with the destination, are asked to describe how favorable they feel toward the place by choosing one of the following: very unfavorable; somewhat unfavorable; indifferent; somewhat favorable; very favorable. It characterizes whether the place has image problems or not.
Semantic differential	<p>Semantic differential is one of the most popular tools. It involves the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Developing a set of relevant dimensions. Respondents are asked to determine the dimensions they would use in thinking about the particular destination;</li> <li>b) Reducing the set of relevant dimensions. The researchers must remove redundant values that add little information;</li> <li>c) Administering the instrument to a sample of respondents;</li> <li>d) Averaging the results;</li> <li>e) Checking on the image variance.</li> </ul> <p>If the variance is high, the place's image doesn't mean a lot and further audience segmentation is necessary.</p>
Evaluative maps	<p>One way to measure how residents view a place is to inventory their visual impressions. The researchers interview the citizens and collect their feelings and impressions towards different parts of the city.</p> <p>Then the words and answers are structured geographically. Certain characteristics are assigned each part of the city, territory, region or country. For example, the most popular or the least popular.</p>

Another way of collecting data, impressions or relations connected with particular place is to get an expert advice from a group of people who know this place. Various experts, current and previous CEOs and spokespersons, key stakeholders, investors,

industrialists, journalists who cover the place, tourist agents, tourist operators, marketing and PR professionals and urban designers can be interviewed. These interviews can serve as a major source of data regarding the way the place is perceived, its disadvantages and how they can be removed. They can familiarize with their experience in marketing the place, the difficulties they had to face with different audiences, the solutions they tried and different partners with whom they cooperated in order to promote the place. (Avraham & Ketter 2008, 25).

### **2.1.3 Formation of the place's image**

Kotler et al. (1993, 134) emphasize that once planners understand the current image of the place, they can start thinking about which image they want to build. The main problem in this work is to create an effective image for each target audience. For an image to be effective, it must meet the following five criteria:

- 1) It must be valid. If the destination promotes its image too far from reality the chances of success are minimal. For instance, when the agency promotes Marcel as “the city for any project”, it is a gross exaggeration. (Ak-kaya 2005, 214).
- 2) It must be believable. Even if the proposed image is valid, it may not be readily believable. If the agency promotes Flanders as “the best place in Europe for business”, it can be valid. But not every buyer of the place will be able to believe in it. Persuasive advertising may be risky in the long term outlook. (ibid).
- 3) It must be simple. If the specific place shows too many images of itself, it leads to confusion. Because most of places have no strategy, they disseminate any image which is dimly positive in their opinion. In this case, there is no priority and they try to promote everything. As a result, at the best, there will be a muddle. (ibid).
- 4) It must have appeal. The image of the place must suggest why people would like to visit or live there. The relation between Salzburg and Mozart

is promoted in different contexts, and it gives to Salzburg regular irresistible appeal. (ibid).

- 5) It must be distinctive. The image works better when it is different from other common themes. There is an overuse of such phrases as “friendly atmosphere”, or “in the center of Europe”, or “the best climate for business”. European cities can find many inventive ways to use the real and original tricks. (ibid).

#### 2.1.4 Tools of Place marketing

There are three main tools that are available for communicating an image: Slogans, themes and positions; Visual symbols; and Events and deeds. Each of these tools has its own rules and possibilities. (Kotler et al. 1993, 135).

##### 1. Slogan, themes and positions.

Like any product, a lot of places use slogans to promote the place and increase its awareness among the target audience. The slogan carries the entity of the place, trying to condense the marketing campaign into a pithy phrase. (Avraham & Ketter 2008, 57). The slogan is useful in generating enthusiasm, momentum and fresh ideas. Several examples of place slogans are shown in Table 2. (Kotler et al. 1993, 136; City nicknames and slogans/ sayings. [referred 18.02.2011]).

**Table 2. Place Campaign Slogans** (Adapted from Kotler et al. 1993, 136; City nicknames and slogans/ sayings. [referred 18.02.2011]).

<i>Place</i>	<i>Slogan</i>
Spain	Everything under the sun
Pennsylvania	America starts here
Saint-Petersburg	City of white nights
Quebec	It feels so different
Copenhagen	Wonderful Copenhagen
Helsinki	White city of the North
Oslo	The city with the great heart
Riga	Cosmopolis of modern architecture
Taylor Country	A nice place to visit, a great place to live

Slogan provides a platform from which the place's image can be further amplified. For example, the Spanish slogan "Everything under the sun", has a short-form, clear and capacious image of the warm place. It also has wide sense enabling it to be used by government and businesses in their marketing projects. (Kotler et al. 1993, 137).

The places can spell out *themes* to drive specific marketing programs addressed to specific audience. The most effective themes are versatile and flexible, yet grounded in reality New Zealand calls itself "The Environmental Destination of the 1990s." recognizing that tourists now feel guilty about spoiling the beauty scenery they cherish. The country now promotes ecotourism, a form of seeing and not disturbing. (ibid).

Another tool is *image positioning* when the specific place positions itself regional, national or international terms as a place for a concrete activity or as a viable alternative attraction to another place that has better and stronger position (ibid). Positioning is not what is done to a city. It is what is done to the mind of the prospect. (Ries & Trout 2001, 2). Kotler et al. (1993, 137) lists some examples of image positioning (Table 3).

**Table 3. Image Positioning Statements** (Adapted from Kotler et al. 1993, 137).

<i>Place</i>	<i>Image Positioning</i>
Miami	Financial capital of South America
Berlin	Capital of New Europe
Denver	Economic, business, transportation, and financial center of the Rocky Mountain Region
Spain	Rising star of the European Community
Costa Rica	Latin America's most stable democracy
New Hampshire	The alternative to Massachusetts

The most successful countries have strong mental images. Speaking about England, people think of pageantry, the Tower of London and Big Ben; about Amsterdam - tulips and Rembrandt; about Italy – Coliseum, St.Peter's and works of art. The mind of people sees cities and countries as mental picture postcards. (Ries & Trout 2001, 138-139).

The challenge of this tool is to promote the image that communicates benefits and unique attributes that make the place stand out among other places. It also must be supported by reality. (Akkaya 2005, 217).

## 2. Visual Symbols.

Many campaigns for different places use in addition to slogans, themes and positions unique visual symbols of the place and part of its image. Visual symbols play a significant role in the place marketing. Many landmark sites of places are permanently etched in the minds of people: Red Square (Moscow), Eiffel Tower (Paris), Big Ben (London), the Great Wall (China), Brandenburg Gates (Berlin), Golden Gate Bridge (San Francisco). These visual symbols usually appear in official documents, brochures, videos, billboards, etc. (Avraham & Ketter 2008, 60; Ries & Trout 2001, 139).

In order to be successful, a visual image needs to reinforce an image argument of the place. If it is inconsistent with the slogan, themes, or positions, it undermines the credibility of the place. Such situations are due to the lack or inconsistency of the place marketing strategy. (Akkaya 2005, 217).

## 3. Events and Deeds.

Another tool that is available for communicating an image is events and deeds. Successfully implemented event can create place's brand and image forever. The events can be bold, or they can be on the quite side, influencing the audience over time. (Kotler et al. 1993, 139).

For years Soviet Union and East Germany have been exporting their athletes and cultural worker for performances to other countries. The aim was to reach the image of the quality overseas and inside the country. Of course, many places are still doing this. The difference was that Soviet Union and East Germany systematically used this technique as the way of reaching political and economical goals. (Akkaya 2005, 220).

The industry of organizing of exhibitions and festivals is a constant in the historic part of Europe. Such established events, as the festival in Glastonbury (Great Britain) and in Roskill (Denmark), are very popular among people all over the world. When the government of Leipzig decided to turn the city into the tourist center, they organized



from scratch summer festival in honor of the son of the city – Johann Sebastian Bach. (ibid).

Building of powerful image of the place is part of the entire marketing process. It demands a good marketing strategy, improvement of the product, and creative invention of the symbols. The selection of tools for communicating an image is a very important step. Here I have examined three major tools of place marketing: 1) slogans, themes and positions; 2) visual symbols; 3) events and deeds. In the next section I want to pay more attention to the last tool and give more detailed description of the events and Event Marketing.

## **2.2 Events as a tool of place marketing**

This section will review literature and theories related to the second research question – the events and Event marketing. The theoretical knowledge within Event marketing is not widely spread. Most of marketing literature gives the examples of Event marketing used by companies. But it's important to note that cities as well as companies can use Event marketing. Not in vain, some experts prefer to compare the city as a producer with a company or institution that offers products and services to its target groups, such as residents, investors, companies, visitors and tourists. (Place marketing: make the difference [referred 18.02.20011]).

### **2.2.1 Event marketing and its objectives**

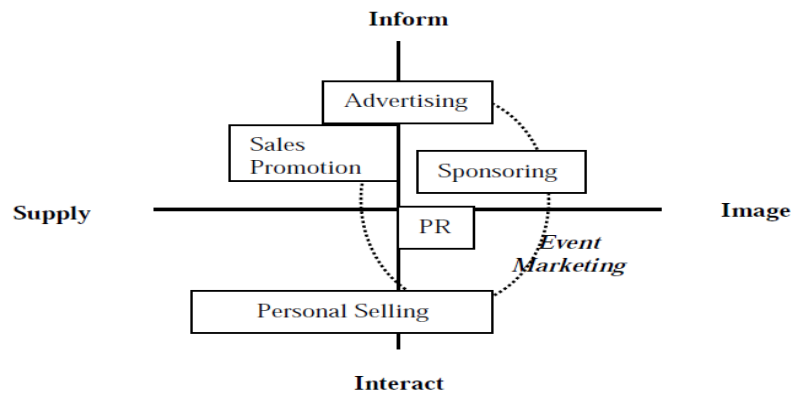
In today's world the market becomes more competitive; an increased number of companies are competing in order to gain market shares. As the result, it has become crucial for companies to find a better way to cut through the competition and reach the target audience. Companies need to make themselves heard; to stand out from the competition is crucial, and events are increasingly proving to be a way of doing so. (Fan & Pfizenmaier, Event sponsorship in China, Corporate Communications: An International Journal, 7(2)/2002).

The modern event industry has grown from a subset of administrative duties and creative individuals in a variety of fields into a full-fledged profession that is practiced

globally (Silvers 2004, 8). According to Behrer & Larsson (1998, 18) the event is an activity that gathers the target group in time and space; it is “a meeting in which an experience is created and a message communicated”. Julia Rutherford Silvers (2004, 2) agrees with this and states that an event is an experience, carefully crafted to deliver an impact on the person in attendance. The activities and environment are integrated into an event design that is staged with precision and polish.

Event marketing is rapidly gaining popularity (Schultz & Barnes 1995, 206). It is marketing through events, where marketing is seen as central and the events are considered to be the marketing tools. It is focusing on a target audience and involves high contact intensity. It turns a message into an event that can be experienced by the audience. By using event marketing the media clutter can be penetrated, and through the meeting a relationship can be established between the product or brand and its target audience. Thus, the return of event marketing is the personal meeting. During an event the company has exclusive access to the customer for at least a few hours, with the media clutter eliminated. (Karlsson & Palmer, 2007).

Behrer and Larsson (1998, 18) define the Event Marketing as “an attempt to coordinate the communication around a sponsored or created event”. They say that it can be seen as a combination of the different parts in the promotion mix. The promotion mix originally consists of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, and public relations (Kotler & Armstrong 2003, 415). However, Shimp (1993, 602-603) states that Event Marketing is separate from advertising, sales promotion, point-of-purchase merchandising, or public relations, but it generally incorporates elements from all of these promotional tools. Sneath et al. (2005) state that a strength that an event has is that it provides an opportunity to meet the target audience in a different way by combining any set of the traditional promotional tools. The role of event marketing in the promotion mix can be seen in the Figure 2 (Eriksson & Jalmsson [referred 14.11.2010]).



**Figure 2. The Role of Event Marketing in the Promotion Mix** (Adapted from Eriksson & Hjalmsö [referred 14.11.2010]).

In the Figure 2 the streaked oval symbolizes event marketing. Behrer & Larsson (1998, 153) explain that event marketing is much about coordinating different ways of communication within the same activity. It has the advertising's way of packaging the message in a form that is friendly for the receiver. The personal selling aspect provides the ability to directly adapt the message to the needs and wants of the receiver. It also has sales promotion possibilities to bring attention to the product and it contributes to create publicity, just like the PR function. Due to this, event marketing cannot generally be placed beside any of the promotional tools.

Any type of event is held for a purpose and objective. Public or private, commercial or charitable, celebratory or commemorative – events bring people together to share an experience and produce a measurable outcome. (Silvers 2004, 2). As with every other marketing and promotion-management decision, the starting point for effective event is to clearly specify the objectives that an event is designed to accomplish. Event marketing has no value unless it accomplishes these objectives. (Shimp 1993, 602-603). To be able to identify them a classification that has been made by Meenaghan and quoted by Eriksson & Hjalmsö (2000) will be used. The objectives are divided into: corporate related, sales, media coverage and personal. Table 4 below gives an overview of possible objectives with event marketing.

**Table 4. Classification of objectives with Event Marketing** (Adapted from Eriksson & Hjälmsson [referred 14.11.2010]).

<b>OBJECTIVES WITH EVENT MARKETING</b>	
<p><b><u>Corporate-related objectives</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affect the corporate image</li> <li>• Create awareness</li> <li>• Create goodwill</li> <li>• Increase ROI</li> <li>• Strengthen internal relations</li> <li>• Establish and maintain relationships with customers and other businesses</li> <li>• Test a new market</li> <li>• Receive feedback</li> <li>• Launch a new product</li> <li>• Convey a message</li> <li>• Drive for overall marketing strategy</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Product-related objectives</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affect the brand or product image</li> <li>• Generate brand or product awareness</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Sales objectives</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase short-term sales</li> <li>• Increase long-term sales (market shares)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Media coverage</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Relations</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Personal objectives</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “CEO ego”</li> </ul>

The objectives play a very important role and work as a base for choosing an appropriate event. When the objectives are set and company knows what it wants to achieve with event marketing, the selection of a specific event can be done. (Meenaghan, Commercial Sponsorship, European Journal of Marketing, 7/1983).

### **2.2.2 The selection of a specific event**

While selecting a particular event, it's important to understand how event is perceived by the target audience. According to Meenaghan (Commercial Sponsorship, European Journal of Marketing, 7/1983), the event should be examined against certain relevant criteria, so that it represents a rational choice. He determined 14 criteria that are considered in the selection of a specific event. The first one is the Ability to fulfill objec-

tives. Events have a capacity to fulfill more than one objective. These should be ranked in hierarchical order. It is also important not to ignore the complex interplay between different objectives. The second criterion is the Image association potential of the particular event. Each event has its own features and perception in the public mind. It is necessary to understand that an event that is appropriate for one company may be unsuitable for another. The third criterion is the Event choice and company/product compatibility. There should be some kind of linkage between the event and the product image. If not, it may confuse the potential consumer or attract negative attention. (Meenaghan, Commercial Sponsorship, *European Journal of Marketing*, 7/1983).

The fourth criterion is the Media coverage potential. According to Kumlin and Petersson (1998) the media coverage potential is an important consideration when selecting an event. Head (1988, 104) also supports the importance of this criterion. (ibid). The Funding requirement is the fifth criterion. The budget must be sufficient, otherwise, there is a risk that the company's reputation may be impaired and that the public may have not good perception. The cost of the event must also be considered in terms of physical resources, staff time and staff talent. (ibid).

Another criterion is the Target audience coverage. An exact definition of the target audience will help in the event selection and increase the effectiveness of the event investment. The Opportunities for guest hospitality is also considered in the selection of a specific event. Guest hospitality means how well the event can offer the company face-to-face contact with selected target audience. The eighth criterion is the Executive Preference. By considering executive preferences the company is less likely to get lead into a bad deal at the same time as it ensures commitment from the top. (ibid).

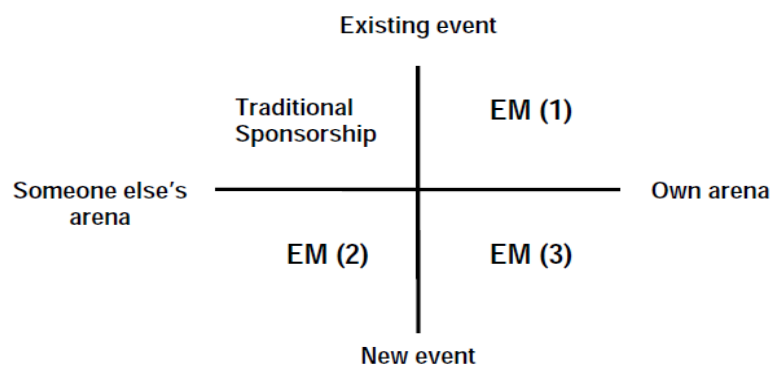
Geographical coverage of the defined target audience is also among these 14 criteria. The definition of geographical coverage requirements will help in selecting the most appropriate sponsorship. It also must be decided if the defined market is reached by a series of events or by the use of a single event to cover the total market. Another one is the Staff knowledge of the proposed event. A certain number of the members of the organization should be involved in the event. These members can act as an expert link between the company and the event, as well as to alert the company to potential pitfalls. The Solus position criterion concerns whether the company should select an

event that will be exclusive to the company or if the company should be involved in co-sponsorship together with other companies. (ibid).

The Possibility for adverse publicity is essential criterion to examine all dimensions of the proposed event, so the company is not affected by unexpected reverse publicity.

And the last criterion is the Possible organization behind the event. If the event is handled by another organisation, the sponsoring company must also consider that organization and its ability to carry out the proper management of the event. (ibid).

**Event Type.** The most important thing is to choose the most appropriate event. According to Behrer & Larsson (1998, 194-200) and quoted by Eriksson & Hjälmsson (2000) there are four types of the events that are shown in Figure 3. It depends whether a company wants to create a new event or to sponsor an existing one, and whether to use someone else's or an own arena for the event.



**Figure 3. Traditional sponsorship and Event Marketing** (Adapted from Eriksson & Hjälmsson [referred 14.11.2010]).

As can be seen in Figure 3 above, *traditional sponsorship* is performed on someone else's arena in already existing event. A good example of it is giving financial support to sport competitions, such as having advertising surrounding the event. (ibid).

*Event Marketing (1)* is about using an existing event to attract customers to the own arena or to profile the arena with the help of an event. For example, arranging the Olympic games in a city. It is an existing event that takes place on the city's own arena, and also through this event city can market itself. (ibid).

*Event Marketing (2)* is when the company creates its own event on someone else's arena. The aim is to portray an image with the help of an arena matching the brand identity. For example, every year Pepsi Max goes to Ibiza and arranges release parties with music and entertainment to emphasize their message "Live life to the Full!" (ibid).

*Event Marketing (3)* is when the company creates its own event on its own arena. The goal is both to attract customers and also to create the relationships with them. For example, Nike Town - Nike's creation of its own permanent arena, where athletes are brought to interact with the customers and show the company's new products. (ibid). Goldblatt (1997, 11-14) has another classification of the events. He divided them as follows: civic events, fairs and festivals, expositions, hallmark events, meetings and conferences, retail events, sport events and tourism.

For the cities the most popular are civic events, hallmark tourist events and sport events. Civic events are public events aimed to the local audience, for example, to celebrate cultural traditions like anniversaries of towns or cities (ibid). Hallmark tourist events are major fairs, expositions, cultural and sporting events of international status which are held on either a regular or a one-off basis. A primary function of the hallmark event is to provide the host community with an opportunity to secure high prominence in the tourism market place. However, international or regional prominence may be gained with significant social and environmental costs. (Hall 1989, 263). Sport events are another type of event marketing in order to attract more customers and promote the city. One example of the growth in popularity in professional sports is the rapid development of sports hall of fame and museum complexes throughout the United States. The 1994 World Cup soccer craze generated excitement, visibility, and, in some cases, significant revenue for numerous destinations throughout the US. (Goldblatt 1997, 14).

Tourism events – events, the goal of which is to attract visitors to a certain destinations, for example arranging a mega event such as Americas Cup. These events create a demand for transport, hospitality and accommodation at that destination. (Mc Ma-

nus, Despite its huge economy and growth event marketing is still evolving, Brand-week, 16/1995).

### **2.2.3 Advantages and disadvantages of the city events**

Event is not like a physical product. Every event is unique and experienced in a different way by each member of the audience. One of the largest communications agencies in Denmark, BYSTED A/S, presents the advantages of using city events as a tool of place marketing (Place marketing: make the difference. [referred 18.02.2011]):

- 1) They are good positive experiences (ibid).
- 2) They can put a town on a map. The international Vildbjerg football cup has made the town of Vildbjerg, Denmark known to many (young) people in Europe. (ibid).
- 3) They are unique one time experience. The Madonna concert in Horsen was the first time Madonna visited Denmark in her career. (ibid).
- 4) They create a special bond between the participants. The participants communicate via social media, share their experience and impressions, give advices and make new friends. (ibid).
- 5) They break everyday city life. The Fringe Festival in Edinburg is funny and surprising. (ibid).
- 6) They can send a strong message. The Earth Hour event sends a strong message to politicians around the world. Attributes that are illustrated through a real event can be perceived as more credible than the oral promises in an advertising message. (Behrer & Larsson, 1998).
- 7) They involve citizens (Place marketing: make the difference. [referred 18.02.2011]).



8) They can increase tourism, revenue and jobs (ibid).

With events as everything else, there is also a backside to the advantageous coin.

There are some difficulties and disadvantages in establishing city events. (Karlsson & Palmer, 2007). For example, events are economically fragile products. Most of the city carnivals are very dependent on the weather. That's why in some big cities the government spends a huge amount of money to disperse the clouds in order not to frustrate the event. (Place marketing: make the difference. [referred 18.02.2011]).

An audience is a prerequisite for the existence of events. If no one buys a ticket then the income is lost forever – unlike, for example, in a restaurant where the same table can be sold the next evening. (ibid).

Tourists and foreign attention is valuable and creating the right expectations through marketing can be half of the event itself. Skanderbro and Vesterbro festivals advertise more than six months prior to the events. That creates positive expectations. (ibid).

According to Behrer & Larsson (1998) another difficulty is to emphasize evaluation of the event. The values that events contribute with – customer perceptions and relationship developments – are complicated to measure. It is also hard to look at “cost per thousand”, which involves the marketing cost divided with a thousand target group individuals.

There is no established infrastructure. While advertisers have an established infrastructure with advertising agencies and media agencies to lean on, event marketers and specialists need absolutely different competence and solutions. Besides traditional activities integrated in the event, event marketing can also involve actors, artists, scriptwriters and sound producers, just to mention a few examples. Since event marketing is not yet as established as other marketing communication tools, the experience of handling these issues is not as widely spread. (ibid).

Finally, Behrer & Larsson (1998) state that, in relation to advertising, another disadvantage is inflexibility. In advertising, it is relatively easy to add media vehicles or media frequency if necessary, provided that the budget allows it. On the other hand,

the event gather a group of people at one specific time and the event can be hard to reproduce only because the number of participants turned out insufficient or not representing the target audience correctly.

To sum up, Event marketing was invented in order to find a new way of approach with the target audience, when well-known methods are not working anymore and full of identical offers. Event is a tool that allows turning advertising into a free gift, taking exacting and world-weary audience by surprise, when they are not waiting for this. But, as in any business, there are some pitfalls. (What is Event-marketing and why is it needed? [referred 27.02.2011]). And this section has mentioned this, paying attention on advantages and disadvantages of the city events and Event marketing. It is not enough just to organize the event. It is important not to forget that Event marketing is a way of bringing advertising message to its audience and it has its specific goals and objectives. Once the event is examined against certain criteria, its next task is to disseminate its message to its target. Next section will examine how event messages and images can be efficiently distributed and how events can be promoted.

## **2.3 Promotion of the event and its messages**

Success of the event largely depends on the promotion. Promotion is “vital in creating awareness of the event, a desire to participate, and a feeling by the potential participant that the investment of time and money validates the benefits the event offers”. (Hoyle 2002, 30). This chapter will examine literature and theories related to selection of promotional methods - advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling, and public relations; selection of advertising media, vehicles and timing; and managing conflicting media sources and messages.

### **2.3.1 Clarifying event's 5 Ws**

According to Hoyle (2002, 30), the foundation for communications is built upon the five Ws – “Why, Who, When, Where, and What”. Whether promotion includes advertising, speeches, stunts, press releases, or brochures, the critical elements of 5 Ws must be emphasized up front – on the cover of the brochure, in the first paragraph of the press release, or in any medium of promotion. It is the first axiom of promotion.

**WHY?** Why should someone take the time and spend the money to come to the event? To answer this question, the marketing and management team for the event must determine the overriding reasons for the event itself. (ibid).

**WHO?** To whom are we marketing the event? Kotler et al. (1993, 148) states that it is essential before choosing messages and media is to clarify the target audience. Each potential target market requires its own messages and media. And it is necessary to distinguish suspects, prospects, hot prospects, and customers. Each buyer group warrants a different media mix strategy.

**WHEN?** Timing is everything. It is very important to maximize the value of timing of the event, carefully weight timing in light of the schedules, patterns, and needs of the market being served. (Hoyle, 36-41).

**WHERE?** Location can be a key asset in the event promotion. In urban areas it is necessary to promote as benefits the availability of public transportation, valet parking, convenience, and efficiency of travel; in rural areas – a chance to enjoy panoramic views and pastoral scenery; in shopping malls – ease of parking, an opportunity for centralized activities, and ancillary shopping and entertainment features to enjoy. (ibid).

**WHAT?** Every event should be unique, or at least be presented as such. It can offer an opportunity to discover a new concept, a look into the future of the industry or trade, or a chance to view an innovative line of products and ideas. Every event should be presented as refreshing and exciting. (ibid).

Goldblatt (2001, 245), in *Special Events, Twenty-First Century Global Event Management*, states that these 5 Ws help determine if the event is feasible, viable, and sustainable.

### 2.3.2 Choosing the broad influence tools

The next step, after clarifying the campaign's goals and timing, the target audience of the place, available resources and some other factors, is to choose the broad influence tools and deliver the campaign central message. The main influence tools are advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, public relations, and personal selling. (Avraham & Ketter 2008, 60-65).

#### **Advertising.**

One of the most predominant and traditional event promotion techniques is advertising (Hoyle 2002, 42). But at the same time, it is the most difficult of all forms of communication (Ries & Trout 2001, 2). Advertising is the most popular tool for place marketing (Avraham & Ketter 2008, 60-65). It is the use of any paid form of non-personal presentation; it is promotion of ideas, goods, or services by an identified sponsor. Thereby, the purchase by an identified city or state of printed space, such as newspapers, magazines, billboards, or broadcast time, such as radio or television, constitutes advertising. (Kotler et al. 1993, 149).

Certain forms of advertising, like television, require a large budget, while other forms, such as newspapers, can be done on a significantly lower budget. Advertising might have an effect on sales simply through its presence. (ibid).

Advertising is based on purchasing media space and using it to deliver messages to target audience. Advertising affords the campaign managers maximum control over the delivered message, the target audience and the timing of the publicity. Yet advertising has several disadvantages, such as consumers' tendency not to trust ads and to doubt their credibility. Every day consumers are exposed to thousands of advertisements, so the effectiveness of each of them is questionable. (Avraham & Ketter 2008, 60-65). Marketers must be circumspect in selecting advertising media, because some may be controversial (Hoyle 2002, 43).

Advertising is not limited to newsletters, magazines, and brochures. A lot of opportunities exist for the marketing of the event, creating not just a helpful item but also a memento of the event for the attendee to enjoy far beyond the final gavel. Tote bags

may be imprinted with the name and logo of the event and the sponsoring advertiser. This is an effective cross-promotion, which is often granted not just for an advertising fee but also to cover the cost of producing the bags themselves. Directional and identification signs may carry the logo and name of the sign sponsor. Key rings, alarm clocks, golf balls, playing cards, badge stickers, and specially designed chocolate bars are the vehicles of specialty advertising. They are limited only by the imagination. (Hoyle 2002, 46).

### **Direct marketing.**

Direct marketing involves directly addressing target groups through mail, telephone, personal meetings, or electronic mail. Target population is sent brochures, maps, photographs and information pamphlets in the hope that they will become interested in investing in or visiting the place or event. One of the disadvantages of this method is the investment of many resources in single individuals, which can prove extremely costly when used for large audience. On the other hand, the use of direct marketing enables the marketers to address each potential customer personally and to respond to his/her specific needs. (Avraham& Ketter 2008, 60-65). The direct marketer can immediately measure the response percentage of inquiries, intenders, and buyers (Kotler et al. 1993, 150).

### **Sales promotion.**

Kotler et al. (1993, 151) states that this method encompasses the use of short-term incentives to encourage buyers to buy a product or service. While advertising offers a reason to buy, sales promotion offers a motive to buy. That's why sales promotion yields faster purchase response than does advertising. This method consist of such devices as free samples, discounts, coupons, cash rebates, patronage rewards, premiums, prizes, warranties, demonstrations, free trials, and contests. Sales promotion tools build a stronger and quicker response than any other influence channel. However its effects are usually short term and do not build lasting place preferences.

### **Public relations.**

Public relations is "the effort to build good relations with the organization's publics by obtaining favorable publicity; building up a good public image; and handling off unfavorable rumors, stories, and events" (Kotler et al. 1993, 152). It is a key ingredient in

place promotion and its major tools include press relations, event publicity, and lobbying (Avraham& Ketter 2008, 60-65).

Marketers have a tendency not to use public relations or to use it as a late addition. But a well thought-out program of public relations, linked with other promotion elements, can bring very good results. (Akkaya 2005, 236). The greatest asset of this method is that “it presents to your public what others say about you rather than what you say about yourself”. It means that an effective press release, media kit, or personal approach may result in editorial coverage in a newspaper. The value of an independently written article implies to the readers the credibility that cannot be inferred from a paid advertisement. (Hoyle 2002, 47).

### **Personal Selling.**

This method includes using of oral presentation in a conversation with one or more potential customers for the purpose of making a sale. It is very effective in building up buyers’ preference, conviction, and action. Among its distinctive advantages are: personal confrontation; cultivation and response. (Kotler et al. 1993, 154).

### **2.3.3 Choosing the advertising media channels, vehicles and timing**

To choose effective media channels and vehicles is a tremendous task. To make a decision in this matter is more difficult than in any other. The first step is allocating the advertising budget to the main advertising media channels, examining these channels for their capacity to deliver reach, frequency, and impact. Kotler et al. (1993, 156-158) and Akkaya (2005, 243) give examples of major media channels, its advantages and disadvantages (Table 5).

**Table 5. Characteristics of the major media channels** (Adapted from Kotler et al. 1993, 156-158; Akkaya 2005, 243).

	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Limitation</b>
1	Television	Combines sound, sight and motion; high attention; appealing to the sense; high reach	High clutter; high absolute cost; less audience selectivity; fleeting exposure
2	Radio	High geographic and demographic selectivity; mass use; low cost	Lower attention than television; audio presentation only; fleeting exposure; non-standardized rate structures
3	Internet	High selectivity; low cost; interactivity	A relatively new media channel; small number of users in some countries
4	Phone	Many users; the possibility of personal communication	Too little coordination at the local level
5	Newspapers	High believability; flexibility; broad acceptance; good local market coverage; timeliness	Short life; small “pass along” audience; poor reproduction quality
6	Magazines	Credibility and prestige; high geographic and demographic selectivity; long life; high-quality reproduction; good pass-along readership	Some waste circulation; long ad purchase lead time; no guarantee of position
7	Leaflets	High selectivity; full control; interactivity; low cost	Cost can be not justified
8	Brochures	Flexibility; full control; the possibility to present the message very effective	Cost can be not justified
9	Direct mail	No ad competition within the same medium; audience selectivity; personalization; flexibility	Relatively high cost: “junk mail” image
10	Outdoor	High repeat exposure; flexibility; low competition; low cost	Creative limitations; no audience selectivity

Marketers select media channels by considering the following variables:

1. Habits of the target audience. For example, telemarketing and direct mail are the most effective media for reaching location decision makers.
2. Product and service. All media channels have different potentials for demonstration, explanation, visualization, believability, and color. For example, tele-

vision is the most effective medium for describing a place or for creating an emotional effect.

3. Message. If the message contains a great deal of technical data, specialized magazines or direct mailings can be used.
4. Cost. What often counts is the cost per thousand exposures rather than the total cost.

Many marketers use several media channels because they recognize that different audiences pay attention on different media. Using several media extends the message's reach and reemphasizes the content. (Kotler et al. 1993, 162-165).

The second step is to choose the special media vehicles within each media category in order to produce the desired response in the most cost-effective way. To coordinate marketing efforts, the media specialists examine data of circulation and cost information for different ad sizes, color options, and ad positions. Beyond this, they evaluate different magazines on qualitative characteristics – prestige, credibility, lead-time, reproduction quality, psychological impact, and editorial climate. (ibid).

The third step in media selection is timing. Timing decisions should take into consideration three factors: audience turnover – the rate in which the target population changes between two periods; the forgetting rate – the rate at which a given message is forgotten; behavior frequency – number of times during the year the target group takes the action one is trying to influence. (ibid).

#### **2.3.4 Managing conflicting media sources and messages**

A place can spend millions of dollars advertising for tourists, residents, or factories only to find uncontrolled communication overwhelming the formal messages (Kotler et al. 1993, 167). A good example is the uncontrolled international attention to the cases pedophilia in Charleroi in Belgium. This negative reputation distributed by communication channels contradicts with the official promotional messages about the attractiveness of Charleroi for investors, travelers and residents. Many places have



found that they are the objects of such conflict coverage by the media: a drug problem in Amsterdam, the terrorist attacks in Bilbao, high unemployment in the north of Italy or the accusation for Brussels' mayor, that he was using official credit card in the nightclub. Long-term and responsible efforts to build the image can be destroyed in one moment in the world where news spread quickly all over. (Akkaya 2005, 257).

In order to neutralize negative impression, there are three responses: ignore them, the thinking is, "Act as if it doesn't exist and it will go away"; counter-attack by immediate sending out a counter message; or solve the problem.

There is no the best response. Much depends on how negative is the impression, how serious and widespread it is. For example, if the damage is not serious and public knowledge is very limited, it is better to ignore the negative impression. If the damage is not serious but is widely known, it is better to use the second response. And if the situation is very serious, widely known and not easily remedied, it is better not to ignore it or use counter-attack but to work toward a long-term response. (Kotler et al. 1993, 169).

This section made it clear, that city event promotion has the best chance for success when the message is matched to the media, all participants are acting in the same direction, and informal impressions reinforce the paid efforts.

In today's fast-growing world, a lot of cities and regions are facing a growing number of competitors. In any European newspapers' or magazines' travel section there are ads for every place on the globe. (Kotler et al. 1993, 171). Places have to find good ways to attract tourists, residents and investors. One of these ways is the organizing of the special city event. But in order to promote the city with the event, we need to promote this event. This chapter has reviewed the literature and theories related to this matter and research questioned stated in the chapter one. In the next chapters this theoretical framework will be logically followed by the empirical part of the thesis.

### **3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This chapter will describe the research process of the thesis – the organization for which the research was done; research objectives and questions; research method; research strategy, which will finally lead up to the data collection and analysis.

#### **3.1 Target organization**

“Mikkeli meets Russia” is a project of Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences. The aim of it is to attract tourists from Russia in order to promote Mikkeli, develop tourist business here and consolidate relationships between Finland and Russia. The project includes organized concerts, cultural and sport events, competitions with participation both Finnish and Russian sides, which are planning to hold annually as a festival during the New Year holidays.

#### **3.2 Purpose of the research and research questions**

Year by year Finnish cities become more and more popular among Russian tourists, investors, universities and employees. Mikkeli is among these cities. But it needs to increase its awareness among Russians and find new ways of attracting them. It's necessary to explore desires and interests of Russian audience and promote market attractiveness to them. Thus, the research objective is to evaluate the value of place marketing practices to position Mikkeli more favorably compared to its rivals, to probe the interests of the potential Russian customers and find the ways of how to attract them to visit and participate in Mikkeli events. The objective of the research shall be met by answering the following research questions, which were mentioned in the Introduction.

The first research question is:

1. What can be done for building a more attractive image for Mikkeli?

The second research question is:

2. What kind of value could events have in the place marketing of Mikkeli?

And the second research question is further divided into two sub-questions:

- a) What kind of demand can be found for the Mikkeli cultural events in Saint-Petersburg, Vyborg and Leningrad area?
- b) Which marketing communication channels can be proposed for promoting Mikkeli event in Saint-Petersburg, Vyborg and Leningrad area?

### **3.3 Quantitative research method in the present study**

Research methods are divided into two main groups: qualitative and quantitative. The most important differences between these two modes – the use of numbers and statistics in the quantitative research while the qualitative research focuses on words. Yin (1994) claims that choice of the research mode depends on the research problem and research questions. The phenomenon of interest in this thesis refers to a quantitative as the interest of potential customers is probed. Also, “what” in research questions typically is connected with quantitative mode. This mode best answers the question “what” through the analysis of formalized and structured information. (Yin 1994; Eriksson & Hjalmssoon [referred 14.11.2010]).

Quantitative research “refers to the systematic empirical investigation of quantitative properties and phenomena and their relationships” (Quantitative research. [referred 02.03.2011]). The main focus of this method is on measuring “how much is happening to how many people”. The main objective measurements are taken through instrumentations rather than through human judgment (Taylor 2005, 235 – 236). Findings from quantitative research are assumed to be measurable and presentable in figures. (Holme & Solvang 1991). The main tools are large scale surveys analyzed using statistical techniques. Quantitative measurable indicators relevant to the pre-determined hypotheses are identified and combined into questionnaires. Questionnaires are then con-

ducted for a random sample. (Current trends in development research. [referred 02.03.2011]).

Thus, as a tool in my research process I decided to use questionnaire (APPENDICES). The questionnaire was created in English with the help of “Mikkeli meets Russia” Project Manager, Heikki Martikainen, and then translated into Russian . The questionnaire was created on the basis of the theoretical framework and consists of the following visual parts:

- 1) Social data: gender, age, marital status and occupation.
- 2) How often participants travel to Finland, which cities they visit or would like to visit, their awareness of Mikkeli.
- 3) What respondents think about spending New Year holidays in Finland, what can attract them to go here for vacations, whether they are interested in the cultural events, their preferences and expectations.
- 4) How participants prefer to organize their trip to Finland, which information sources and social media they use.

The questionnaire was done with Webropol tools – an online solution for conducting surveys, gathering data, managing feedback, and reporting data. Webropol utilizes seamlessly the internet, intranets, e-mail and mobile devices. (Webropol - an easy tool to ensure good decisions. [referred 02.03.2011]).

The questionnaire had both opened and closed questions. The closed questions were short and it wasn't necessary for respondents to write much. They were simply expected to mark an “X” or “V” where they feel it corresponds with them most. Completion of the questionnaire took less than 10 minutes.

### **3.4 Data collection with a survey**

The method of data collection I used in this study was a survey. Survey research is the collecting information in a systematic way from a sample of individuals. A survey may focus on different topics such as preferences, behavior, or factual information, depending on its purpose. Since survey research is always based on a sample of the population, the success of the research is dependent on the representativeness of the population of concern. (Statistical survey. [referred 02.03.2011]). A survey is appropriate when investigating many entities and few variables, and it gives exact but shallow data (Karlsson & Palmer [referred 14.11.2010]).

I found survey to be the most appropriate strategy for my research, since I wanted to get the information from Saint-Petersburg's citizens in order to understand and predict some aspects of their behavior. The method of collecting data will be presented in the following section.

### **3.5 Data collection procedures and analysis of data**

The survey was promoted during November-December 2010. The questionnaire was distributed among citizens from St. Petersburg, Vyborg and Leningrad area as it is the main target audience of the project "Mikkeli meets Russia". Promoting the survey I used two ways.

Firstly, I spread questionnaires among people who were going to apply for Finnish visa, because they are potential visitors to Finland and they are somehow interested in this country. After 11.02.2011 Finnish Embassy in Saint-Petersburg changed its address and improved its services. But before this date, usually there were big queues with hundreds of people near Finnish Embassy, people were waiting about 1-3 or even more hours to get inside, they were waiting for their turn and doing nothing. So I decided that, while they had time, it might be good idea to distribute questionnaires among them and maybe tell them a bit about this project. But as it turned out, it was the hardest part of my research. Before going there I had prepared for the survey – I printed questionnaires with colorful pictures of Mikkeli, bought pens and sweets in order somehow to attract the participants. With a good mood and smile I went to the

Embassy, but to my surprise I was met by sullen people tired of working every day. Of course, some people answered with a pleasure, but half of them categorically refused to fill out questionnaires. The reason is that most of Russian people don't trust different surveys or researches, they even don't want to hear what is offered to them, and they usually think that somebody wants to mix them up or to sell something (Why is it impossible to build democracy in Russia? [referred 02.03.2011]). Anyway, the result of this attempt was 85 respondents. I also asked 12 people to participate in the survey in the bus on my way from Saint-Petersburg to Mikkeli.

Another way was distributing the questionnaire in the Internet. As I mentioned above I created the questionnaire with Webropol tools; with the help of vkontakte.ru I sent the invitations to Russian users to visit this web-site and answer the questions. In V Kontakte.ru (Russian "Facebook") there are a lot of groups about Finland with people who are interested in this country, who travel there or would like to do this. Their opinion can be very important. Thus I distributed invitations in these groups. I also asked to participate in the survey some Russian students who were studying there and some of my friends who were familiar with Finland and its culture. The questionnaire was opened for 2 weeks and I received 427 responses.

After the data was gathered, I started the analysis over received results. I used SPSS program in order to examine the information and make necessary conclusions. Initially, I analyzed the general information of the respondents such as gender, age, marital status and occupation and then proceeded to the other parts. Tendencies arising from the data were examined and interpreted correctly in order to build them into charts and diagrams.

This chapter has presented a description of the methodology used in my thesis. I have covered my choice and motivation regarding to research purpose, questions, method, strategy, data collection and analysis methods. Next chapter will present the findings derived from the data of the research.

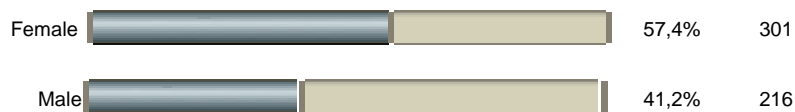
## 4 RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY DATA

The findings from the survey are presented in this chapter. The survey aims to find out some basic information about them, such as reason for visiting Finland, cities they prefer to visit, the way they organize their trip, their preferences in pastime and cultural events, etc.

Total number of respondents of the survey is 524. The findings of the survey are illustrated with different charts and tables below.

### *Gender*

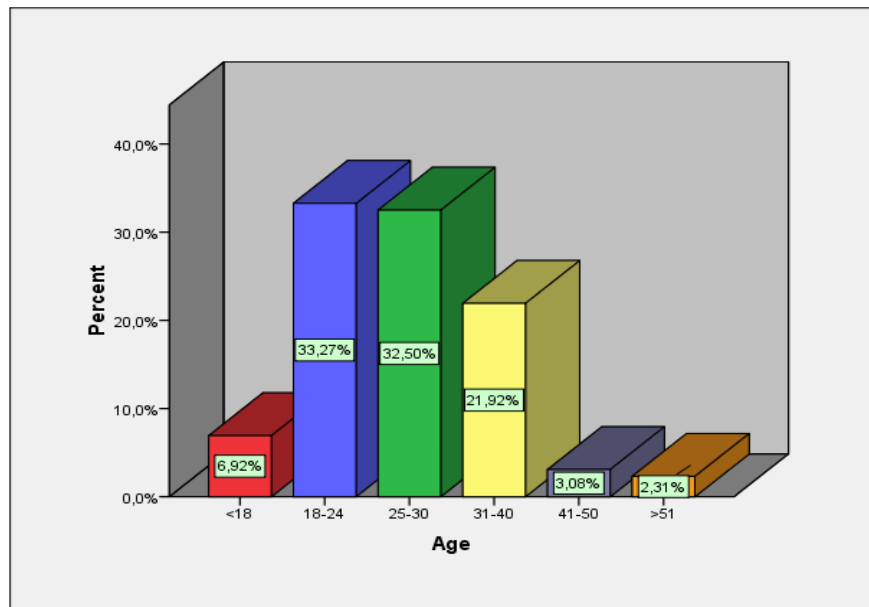
There were 301 women (57,4%) and 216 men (41,2%), who participated in the survey. 7 respondents (1,3%) gave no response. (Figure 4).



**Figure 4. Respondent's gender**

### *Age*

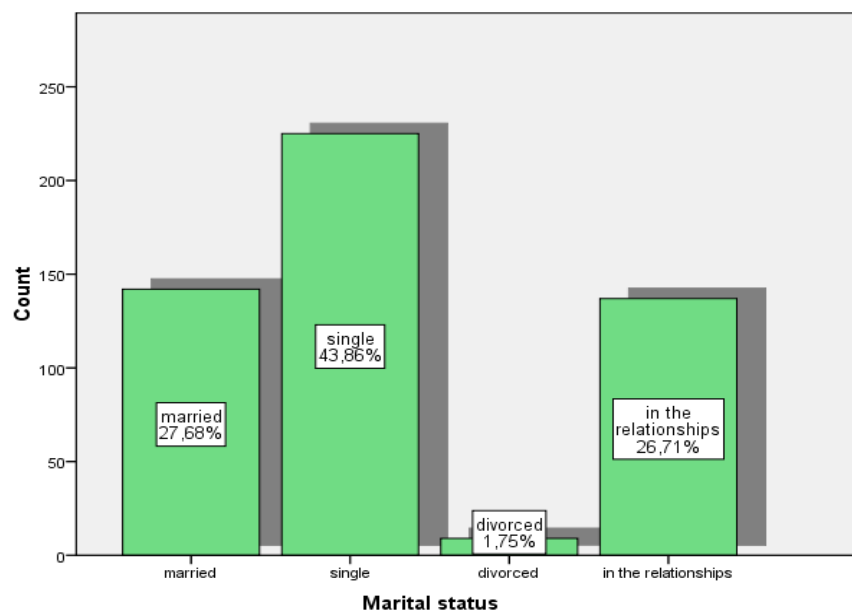
Figure 5 represents the age distribution of the respondents in the survey. The respondents could choose from different age boxes in which they belong. Most of the respondents are 18-24 years old (173 persons) and 25-30 years old (169 persons). Another largest group is 31-40 years old with 114 persons (21,92%). 36 respondents (6,92%) are younger 18 years, most of them are first year students in Mikkeli and other Finnish cities. 16 respondents (3,08%) are 41-50 years old. And the smallest age group with 12 persons (2,31%) is more than 50 years old. In 4 questionnaires (0,8%) the respondents didn't answer this question.



**Figure 5. Respondent's age**

### *Marital status*

Figure 6 shows that 43,86% of the respondents are single. And over half of the respondents are married or in the relationships. Only 1,75% (9 persons) were divorced. While 11 respondents (2,1%) didn't answer the question.

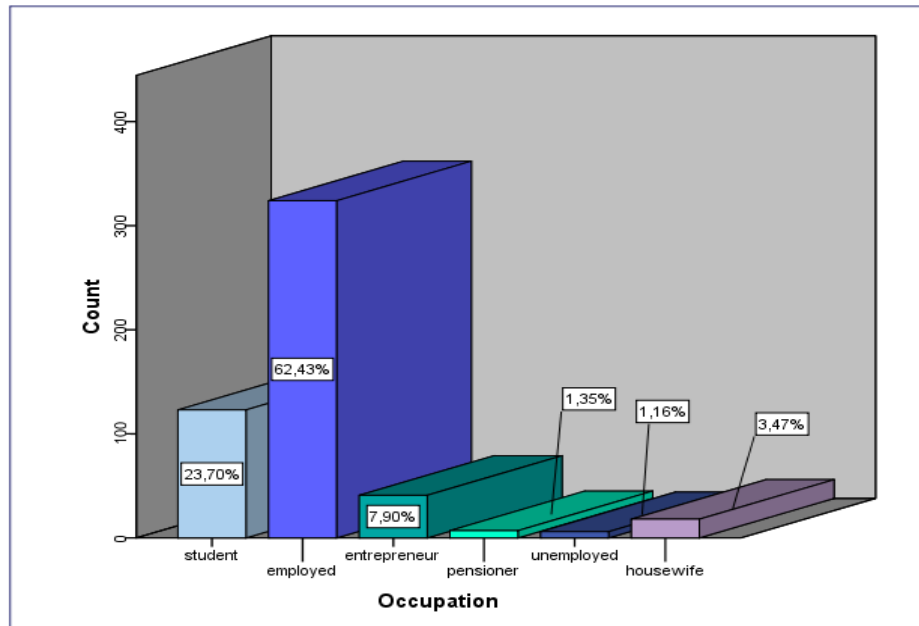


**Figure 6. Marital status of the respondents**



### Occupation

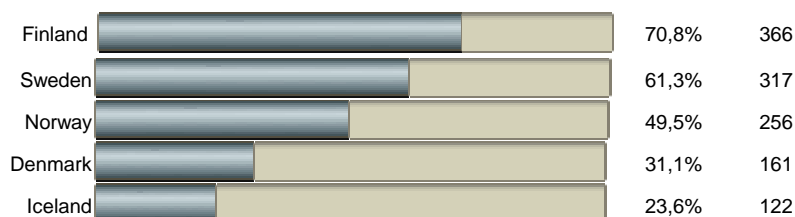
Figure 7 represents that 62,43% (324 persons) are employed; 23,7% (123 persons) are students; 7,9% (41 persons) are entrepreneurs. The remaining 5,98% are housewives, pensioners and unemployed. 5 answers (1%) were missing.



**Figure 7. Occupation of the respondents**

*To which Nordic or Scandinavian countries are you interested to travel?*

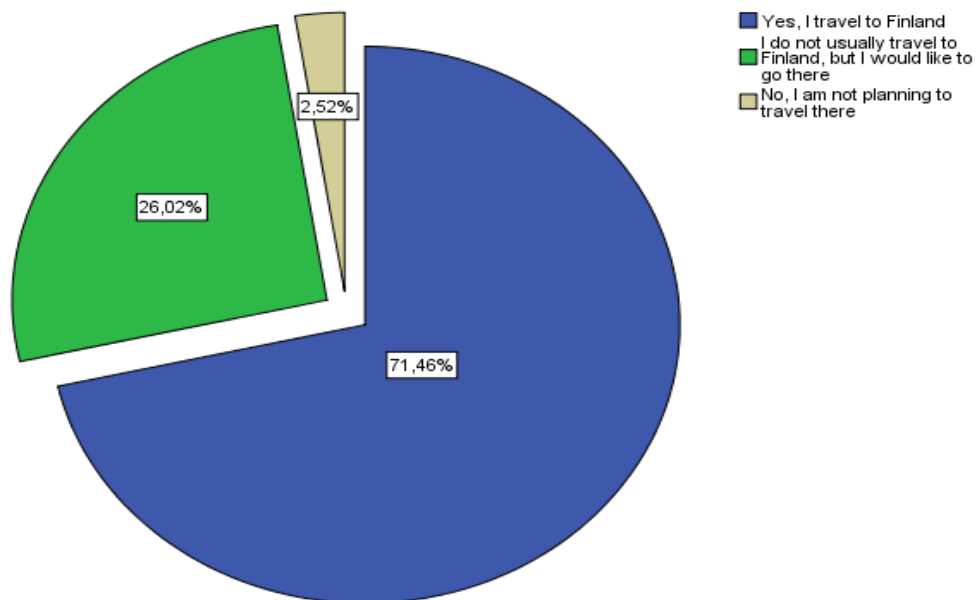
In this question respondents could choose several answers. Thus, among Nordic and Scandinavian countries, where respondents are interested travel to, Finland is on the first place. On the second place is Sweden. On the third place is Norway. (Figure 8).



**Figure 8. Countries in which respondent is interested**

*Do you travel to Finland or plan to travel there in the nearest future?*

368 respondents (71,46%) travel to Finland and 134 respondents (26,02%) would like to go there (Figure 9).



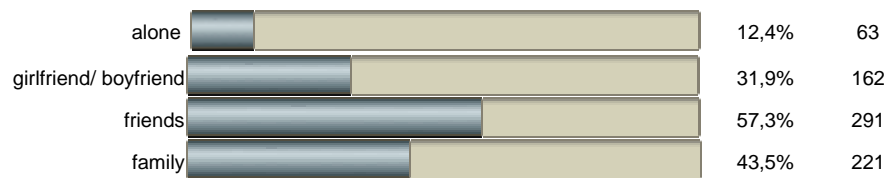
**Figure 9. Respondent's interest to travel to Finland**

*If you travel to Finland, how often do you do this?*

Most of those who travel to Finland do it more than 4 times per year (26,81%). 14,48% of all respondents (74 persons) travel there 3-4 times per year. 16,63% (85 persons) travel to Finland 1-2 times per year and 16,44% (84 persons) – rarely. While 13 respondents (2,5%) didn't answer this question.

*Who do you usually travel with?*

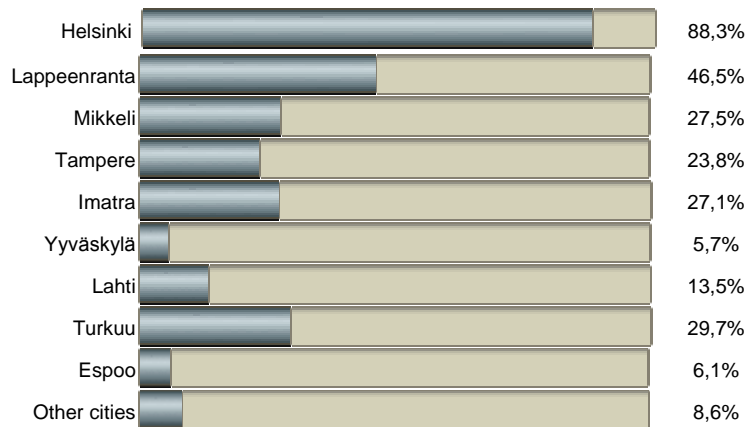
In this question respondents could choose several answers. Figure 10 shows that over half of the respondents (57,3%) prefer to travel with their friends. Also, large number of the respondents travel with their family (43,5%) or with girlfriend/ boyfriend (31,9%). Only 12,4% of the participants in the survey travel alone.



**Figure 10. With whom respondent usually travel**

*Which Finnish cities are more interesting to you?*

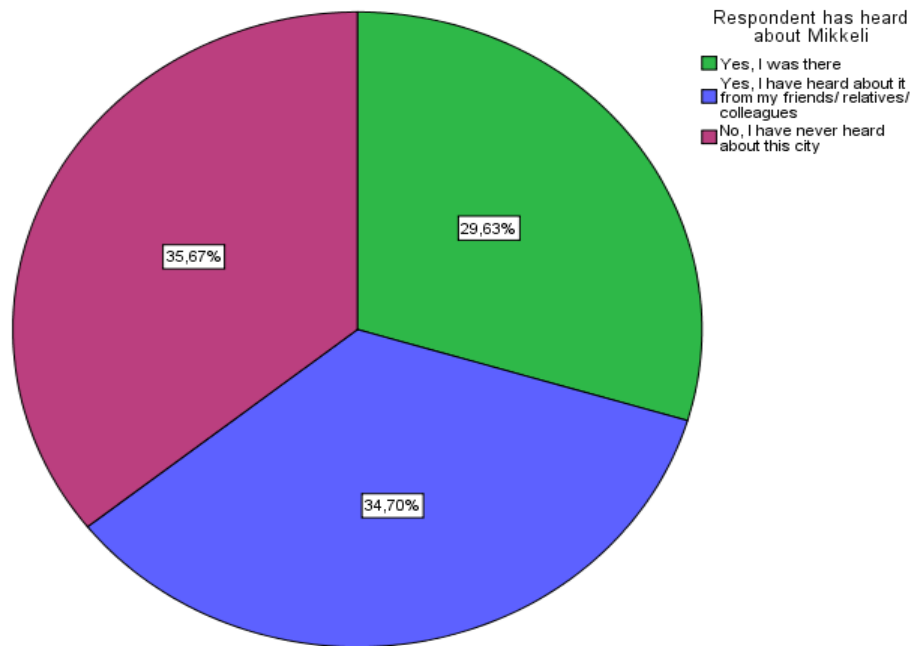
In the question, which cities are more interesting to the respondents, they could choose several answers. The first place was taken by Helsinki (88,3%). The second place took Lappeenranta (46,5%). On the third place is Turku (29,7%). Mikkeli (27,5%) is on the fourth place. Imatra (27,1%), Tampere (23,8%), Lahti (13,5%), Espoo (6,1%) and Yyvaskyla (5,7%) are also interesting to the respondents. Among other cities, they mentioned Rovaniemi, Kotka, Savonlinna, Levi, Jounsuu, Kuopio, Vuokatti, Oulu and Porvo. In 12 questionnaires (2,3%) the respondents didn't answer this question. (Figure 11).



**Figure 11. Cities interesting to the respondents**

*Have you heard anything about Mikkeli?*

As concerning Mikkeli, majority of the respondents, 183 people (35,67%), have never heard about this city. 178 respondents (34,70%) know about it from their friends, relatives or colleagues. And 152 respondents were in this city. (Figure 12).



**Figure 12. Awareness of Mikkeli (1)**

Of those who have been in Mikkeli, 40,1% are/were studying there; 27,8% have friends there; 25,3% were passing through this city; 19,1% had shopping and 13,0% had holidays there. Among other reasons respondents named: skiing, walking, working, renting the cottage not far from Mikkeli, having house there. Some respondents were there accidentally due to being on a wrong way. (Figure 13).



**Figure 13. Awareness of Mikkeli (2)**

*How do you usually go (or would like to go) to Finland?*

In this question respondents could choose several answers. Majority of the respondents (79,5%) prefer to travel by car. 40% of the respondents are also traveling by bus and

18,2% of the respondents are traveling by train. The plane is not so popular because Finland is close to Russia and it is more expensive way of traveling.

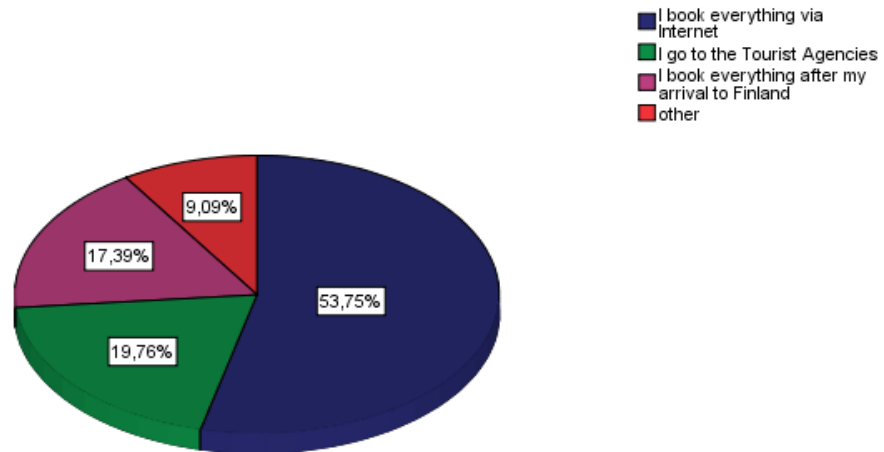
The mistake in this question is that I didn't consider the ferry boat as the mean of transport.

*Where would you like to stay in Finland?*

Concerning possible type of accommodation, respondents could also choose several answers. Most of the participants in the survey prefer to stay in the hotel (60,7%) or in the cottage (49,2%). 28,1% of them would like to stay in the friend's or relative's apartment. Among other types of accommodation they named student housing, camping, hostel. Some of the respondents prefer to travel only for one day and don't stay anywhere, some of them are traveling by ferry boat and staying directly there. 8 answers (1,5%) were missing.

*In which way do you prefer to organize your trip to Finland?*

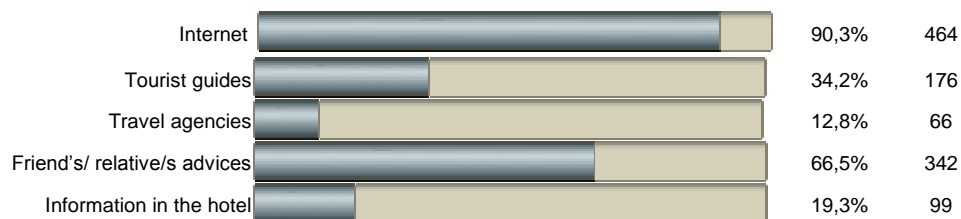
Over half of the respondents (53,75%) prefer to organize their trip to Finland by booking everything via Internet. Only 17,39% of them go to the Tourist Agency. 19,76% book everything after their arrival to Finland. 9,09% of the respondents named other reasons such as: 1) just go, without booking; 2) friends or family organize everything; 3) don't book, go for one day; 4) book themselves. 18 answers (3,4%) were missing. (Figure 14).



**Figure 14. The way respondent prefers to organize the trip to Finland**

*Which information sources do you use or would like to use during your vacations?*

In this question respondents could choose several answers. Almost all respondents (90,3%) use Internet during their vacations. Friend's and relative's advices are also very popular, 66,5% of the respondents follow them. Tourist guides are used by one third of the respondents (34,2%). Less popular are information in the hotel (19,3%) and travel agencies (12,8%). 10 respondents (1,9%) didn't answer this question. (Figure 15).

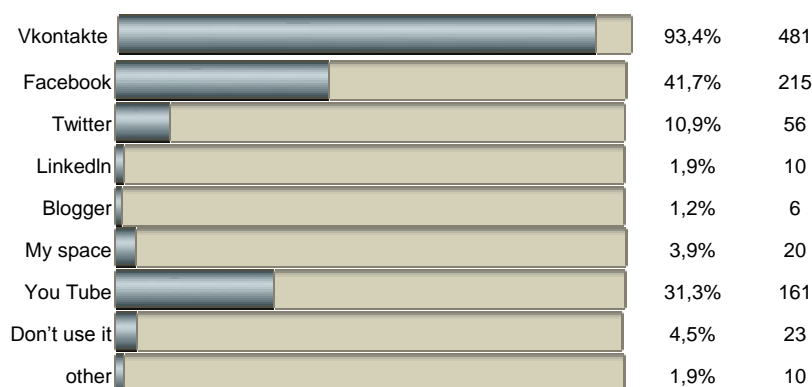


**Figure 15. Information sources respondent prefers to use**

*Which social media services do you use?*

In this question respondents could choose several answers. Figure 16 demonstrates that among social media the most popular is Vkontakte, it is used by 481 persons (93,4%). Facebook and YouTube are also in a great demand, these social media are used by 215 respondents (41,7%) and 161 respondents (31,3%), respectively. 56 per-

sons (10,9%) use Twitter. Less popular are My space (3,9%), LinkedIn (1,9%) and Blogger (1,2%). Also, 1,9% of the respondents use other social media such as Formspring, Google, Livejournal. 4,5% of the respondents do not use social media at all.



**Figure 16. Social media respondent prefers to use**

*What do you think about spending New Year holidays in Finland?*

Over half of the respondents, 295 persons (57,73%), would like to spend New Year holidays in Finland, 117 persons (22,9%) prefer to stay in Russia and 99 persons (19,37%) would like to go to another country. 13 persons (2,5%) didn't answer this question.

*How do you prefer to spend your time during New Year holidays in Finland, what would you like to see or visit?*

The most popular during New Year holidays in Finland is shopping. Almost all respondents prefer to go for shopping during their vacations. Majority of the respondents would like to go or will go for sure to the church, castle, fortress, excursion, museum or art exhibition. Amusement or theme park, spa, sport and night-clubs are also among the most preferable places for the respondents. Theatre, opera, ballet, and rock festivals are less interesting for them. (Table 6).

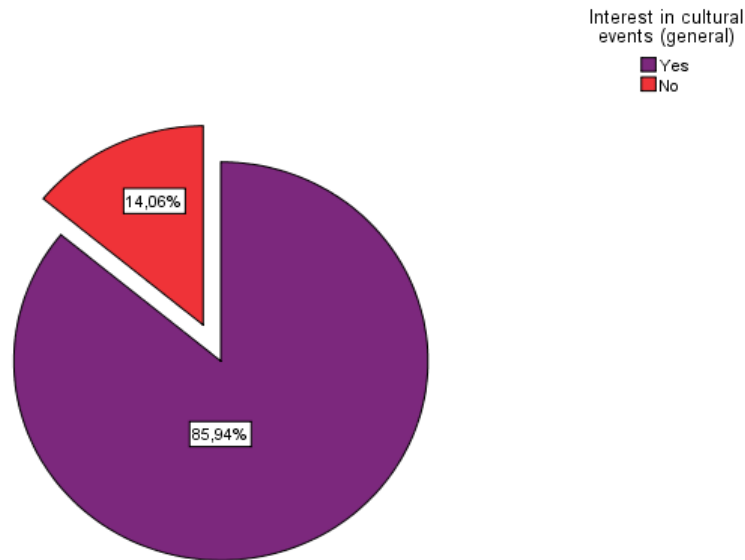
**Table 6. Interest in holiday pastime**

	<b>No, it's not for me (1)</b>	<b>I doubt whether I will go (2)</b>	<b>I can't say (3)</b>	<b>I would like to go (4)</b>	<b>I will go for sure (5)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Church, castle, fortress, excursion	<b>14,2%</b> 70	<b>12,8%</b> 63	<b>13,6%</b> 67	<b>42,8%</b> 211	<b>16,6%</b> 82	<b>3,35</b>
Museum or art exhibition	<b>5,2%</b> 26	<b>11,4%</b> 57	<b>11,8%</b> 59	<b>50,3%</b> 251	<b>21,2%</b> 106	<b>3,71</b>
Theatre	<b>12,5%</b> 61	<b>27,9%</b> 136	<b>24,2%</b> 118	<b>24,8%</b> 121	<b>10,5%</b> 51	<b>2,93</b>
Rock music festival	<b>28,6%</b> 136	<b>21,2%</b> 101	<b>18,7%</b> 89	<b>21,6%</b> 103	<b>9,9%</b> 47	<b>2,63</b>
Opera or ballet	<b>22,9%</b> 111	<b>26%</b> 126	<b>23,6%</b> 114	<b>20%</b> 97	<b>7,4%</b> 36	<b>2,63</b>
Amusement or theme park	<b>6,9%</b> 34	<b>8,3%</b> 41	<b>11,8%</b> 58	<b>41,2%</b> 203	<b>31,8%</b> 157	<b>3,83</b>
Spa	<b>12,8%</b> 63	<b>9,3%</b> 46	<b>13,2%</b> 65	<b>36,2%</b> 178	<b>28,5%</b> 140	<b>3,58</b>
Sport	<b>8,5%</b> 41	<b>12,8%</b> 62	<b>16,5%</b> 80	<b>32,2%</b> 156	<b>30,1%</b> 146	<b>3,63</b>
Shopping	<b>2,2%</b> 11	<b>3,8%</b> 19	<b>7,2%</b> 36	<b>30,6%</b> 152	<b>56,1%</b> 279	<b>4,35</b>
Night clubs	<b>11,8%</b> 58	<b>8,7%</b> 43	<b>13,4%</b> 66	<b>29,4%</b> 145	<b>36,7%</b> 181	<b>3,71</b>

*Are you interested in cultural events of the city during your New Year visit in Finland?*

Regard to the interest in cultural events, most of the respondents – 428 persons (85,94%) – are interested in cultural events of the city during New Year visit in Finland. And 70 persons (14,06%) are not interested. 26 respondents (5%) ignored this question. (Figure 17).





**Figure 17. Interest in cultural events (general)**

*Which of the following cultural events are interesting for you and what you would like to visit during the New Year holidays?*

Outdoor events, New Year Ball, Dance Show and Sport events are more interesting for the respondents. Over half of them would like to visit or will visit for sure these events. Children's New Year concert is not so interesting, only 22,1% would like to go or will go there for sure. Classical music concerts are somehow interesting for 29,3% of the respondents, while about half of the participants doubt whether they will go or will not go there at all. Concerning theatre or musicals, about 40% of the respondents are interested in it and about 40% are not, about 20% of the respondents can't answer this question. (Table 7).

**Table 7. Interest in cultural events**

	No, it's not for me (1)	I doubt whether I will go (2)	I can't say (3)	I would like to go (4)	I will go for sure (5)	Mean
Outdoor events	6,6% 33	1,6% 8	7,2% 36	47% 236	37,6% 189	4,08
Children's New Year concert	40,1% 196	22,3% 109	15,5% 76	14,3% 70	7,8% 38	2,27
Classical music concerts	26,8% 131	21,7% 106	22,1% 108	23,4% 114	5,9% 29	2,6
Theatre or musicals	17% 83	19,4% 95	20,9% 102	30,5% 149	12,3% 60	3,02
New Year Ball	8% 39	9,6% 47	15,9% 78	35,3% 173	31,2% 153	3,72
Dance show	8,9% 44	7,5% 37	17,2% 85	33,5% 166	32,9% 163	3,74
Sport events	9,5% 47	10,9% 54	21,9% 108	32,6% 161	25,1% 124	3,53

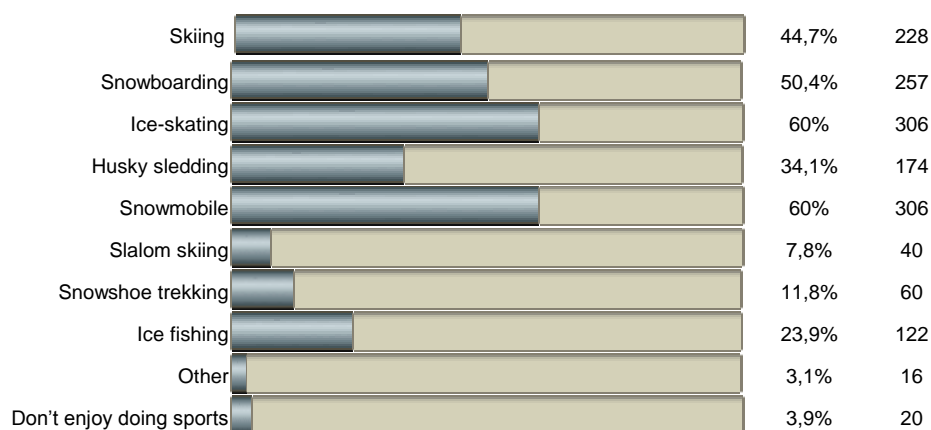
*Which cultural events would you like to add to the list above?*

Most of respondents think that listed above is enough. Among events which respondents want to add are: city tour; concert with New Year entertaining programme; concerts of world-famous artists ; performance of modern DJ's; festivals and fairs; Carnival; New Year/ Christmas fair; Pancake festival; children fest "Ёлка" ("Christmas tree"); singing and dancing in the ring with the Christmas tree, jolly outdoor games; festival of national cooking; stand-up meal party; dinner in the nice place; restaurant; sampling of Finnish vodka, beer, liqueurs, national meal; evening of national creative work; traditional events and activities; national colour; cinema; some exhibitions in the museums of modern art; photo exhibitions; night club; ski resorts (snowboarding, skiing); (mass) skating ; ice fishing; big snow battle; curd roll sledding; Finnish circus; visiting of Santa Claus; sauna; aquapark; shopping; salute; fire show.

*Which kind of winter sports and outdoor activities do you prefer doing during winter holidays in Finland?*

In this question respondents could choose several answers. Figure 18 represents that the most popular winter sports and outdoor activities that respondents prefer during winter holidays are: ice-skating (60%), snowmobile (60%), snowboarding (50,4%),

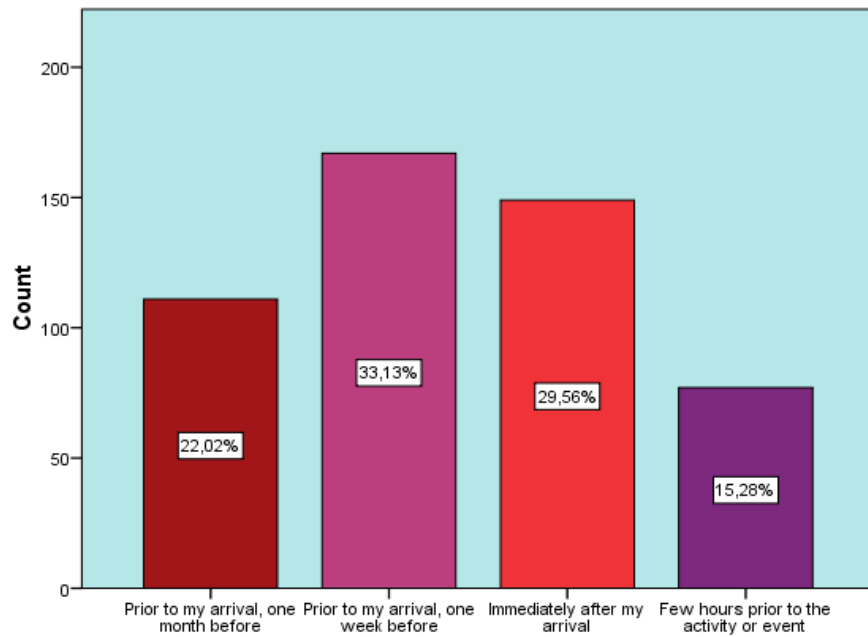
skiing (44,7%), husky sledding (34,1%) and ice fishing (23,9%). Snowshoe trekking (11,8%) and slalom skiing (7,8%) are less popular. Among other sports and outdoor activities, respondents mentioned: cross-country skiing; sledding on “curd rolls”; hockey; playing at snowballs; sculpting snowwoman. 3,9% of the respondents don’t enjoy doing sports or like to watch all these sports but not to participate. 14 answers (2,7%) were missing.



**Figure 18. Respondent’s interest in winter sports and outdoor activities**

*When do you usually decide which events and cultural activities you will visit?*

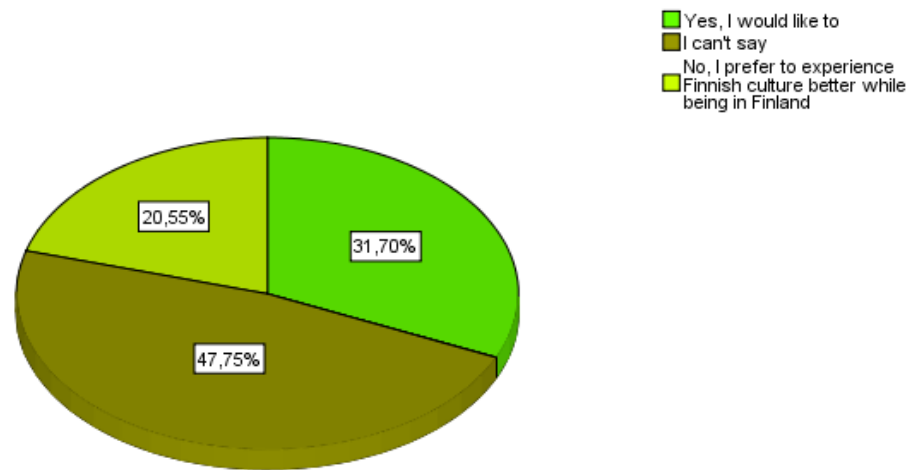
Figure 19 shows that over half of the respondents decide which events and cultural activities they will visit prior to their arrival – 22,02% of the respondents decide one month before and 33,13% of the respondents decide one week before. About one third (29,56%) do it immediately after their arrival. 15,28% of the respondents decide what they will visit few hours prior to the activity or event. 20 persons (3,8%) gave no response to this question.



**Figure 19. Period of time, when respondent decides which event and activities he will visit**

*Would you like to see Russian bands, artists, dancers during cultural events in Finland?*

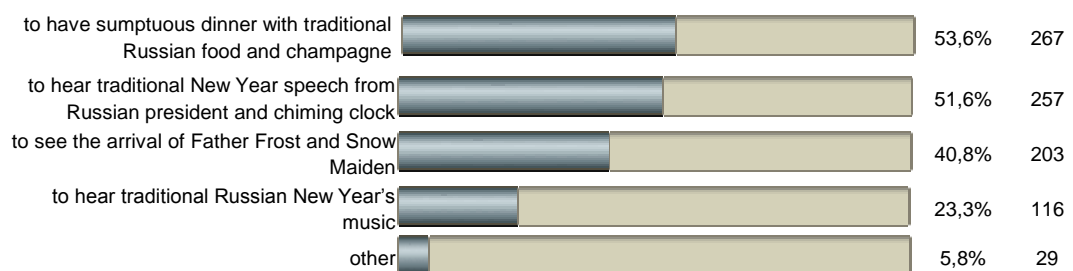
Figure 20 demonstrates that about one third of the respondents, 162 persons (31,7%), would like to see Russian bands, artists, dancers during cultural events in Finland. 105 respondents (20,55%) prefer to experience Finnish culture better while being in Finland. Most respondents state that they are tired of Russians, that they don't want to see them; they can see Russians in Russia, in Finland they want to experience Finnish culture such as Finnish artists, popular music bands and groups, dancers, and Finnish traditions. About half of all respondents (47,75%) couldn't answer this question. 13 answers (2,5%) were missing.



**Figure 20. Respondent's desire to see Russian bands, artists, dancers**

*Which Russian New Year traditions would you like to find during your vocations in Finland?*

In this question respondents could choose several answers. Figure 21 shows that during NY vocations over half of the respondents would like to have sumptuous dinner with traditional Russian food and champagne. Also, over half of the respondents would like to hear traditional New Year speech from Russian president and chiming clock. 40,8% of the respondents would like to see the arrival of Father Frost and Snow Maiden. To hear traditional Russian New Year's music chose 23,6% of the respondents. Some of them answered that they don't want to see Russian traditions during their vocations or anything that concerns with Russia. Among other things, respondents mentioned that they want to see New Year Tree, a lot of mandarins, salad "Olivier", dances and Finnish New Year traditions.



**Figure 21. Respondent's preferences in New Year's traditions**

*In which items are you interested during your shopping?*

In this question respondents could choose several answers. During shopping most of the respondents are interested in clothes (83,7%), souvenirs and presents (65%), shoes (57,6%), food (40,9%), and household issues (32,4%). Services (10,4%) are less interested for them. Among other items, they are interested in spa, accessorizes, books, cosmetics, medicine, mobile phones Nokia, sporting goods, musical instruments, technical equipment, and electronics.

*How many days would you like to stay in Finland during your New Year holidays?*

458 respondents answered this question. 7 days was the average number of days that they would like to stay in Finland during New Year holidays.

*How much do you plan to spend per person during your New Year holidays?*

At the moment, when the survey was conducted, 1EUR=41RUB approximately.

About 40% of the respondents are planning to spend 5000-10000 rubles during their vacation; 33,14% of the respondents – 10000-20000 rubles; 20% of the respondents – more than 20000 rubles.

But this question is very tricky. Firstly, the amount of money that people are planning to spend during their vacations depends on a lot of factors – the duration of their vacation, place of staying (it can be the hotel, for which they have to pay, or their friend's apartment, that is free for them), whether they are going to participate in any events or not, etc. Secondly, very often the amount of money that we are planning or want to spend doesn't correspond to how much we will spend in fact.

*Is there some specific reason that hinders you to travel to Finland for New Year?*

Most of the respondents answered that they have financial problems. Another important reason is job and lack of time. Most of the students have exams in January. For some people, it is a rule to spend New Year with family or friends in Russia. For other

people, it is difficult to find or gather the company of friends who wants to go there. Some have other plans, for example, going to other Russian cities or other countries. Some respondents have expired passports or passports with maiden name. Some of them have expired visas or have no visas at all. To get visas they need to spend a lot of time because before New Year holidays there are big queues in the embassy. Also, respondents mentioned that during this period there are unreal queues in the border and the prices on cottages are much higher.

*Is there some reason that hinders you to participate in cultural activities?*

Most of respondents answered that they have no reason that hinders them to participate in cultural activities. Other answered that don't know language – either English or Finnish. Some people think that it is boring, some don't enjoy cultural or mass activities; some don't like cold weather. Some wrote: "If I am in Finland, I would like to spend New Year away from the noise".

This chapter has covered the results of my research. The following chapter will present discussions and concluding remark of the thesis.

## 5 DISCUSSIONS

This chapter intends to show the link between the findings and the theoretical work. It presents the discussion concerning the results and recommendations on the content of Mikkeli image building. Reliability and validity of the research are also discussed as well as possibilities for future studies.

### 5.1 What can be done for building a more attractive image for Mikkeli?

Building the image is a complicated process. Firstly, it is necessary to understand what is unique about Mikkeli and how it is different from the competing places.

According to the findings of this study, among Nordic or Scandinavian countries, Finland is the most interesting to travel to by the respondents. Over 70% of the respondents usually travel and over 25% would like to go there. Relations between Finland and Russia are actively developing in various spheres of modern life. Over the past few years, Finland has got into the focus of tourist interests of Russians. Today the citizens of Russia are the largest group of foreign tourists. Revenues of the Finnish economy from the Russian tourists are around 500 million Euros per year.

(Взаимоотношения Финляндии и России. [referred 27.03.2011]).

Among Finnish cities which are interesting to the respondents Mikkeli is on the fourth place. Mikkeli is the largest urban centre of the South Savo region. Its vision was defined in 2005 in the City Council meeting and according to it:

*“Compact centre, rural surroundings and lake scenery presents excellent circumstances for living, working and leisure time in the proximity and influence sphere of Helsinki metropolitan area and St.Petersburg. The expertise in Mikkeli region consists of modern small- and medium size enterprises, and high education- and research institutes. The city of Mikkeli is a remarkable administrative centre. Visibility and attractiveness of Mikkeli are based on high quality culture, internationality, good environmental image and on a strong history as a military headquarters. Development and services of the Mikkeli region*



*and province are assured by the regional municipality frame and provincial cooperation.” (Vision. [referred 25.03.2011]).*

Now Mikkeli is also a lively city of festivals, theatre performances, music, ice-hockey, skiing and sport competitions. It is a city where everyone can have a rest and get positive emotions. Today there are arranged such festivals as Mikkeli Music Festival and Savcor Ballet Festival, basis of which is good relationships with Mariinsky theatre, Valery Gergiev and Russian ballet groups (Регион Южное Саво и Россия. [referred 20.03.2011]). Mikkeli can further develop these directions and market itself not only as a city of beautiful nature and magic scenery but also pay attention on its cultural features.

According to the theoretical framework (see e.g. Kotler et al. 1993, 129), measuring of the place image of the place consists of two steps: 1) Selecting a target audience; 2) Measuring the audiences’ perception’s relevant attributes. In our case, we select Russian tourists – visitors – as a target audience. Tourists from Russia is already the largest foreign target group in tourism, so the region South Savo and the companies working in the field of tourism services should be more in line with the requirements of Russian customers (Регион Южное Саво и Россия. [referred 20.03.2011]).

Based on the findings, the audience awareness about Mikkeli is not very good. Only about 30% of the respondents have ever been in Mikkeli, and it is about 42% of those who travel to Finland. About 35% of the respondents have heard about this city but have never been there and about 35% have never heard about it. The afore mentioned findings of the present study clearly guide that Mikkeli should increase its awareness among the potential Russian tourists, refresh and improve its image, build effective image for visitors. But it must be valid, believable and have appeal.

Let’s pay attention on the tools that are available for communicating an image of Mikkeli.

- 1) Slogan, positioning. According to the theoretical framework (see e.g. Avraham&Ketter 2008, 57; Kotler et al. 1993, 136; etc.), slogan provides a platform from which the place’s image can be further amplified. Doing this

research I couldn't find the slogan of Mikkeli. Maybe it exists, but when visiting websites of the city (mikkeli.fi and visitmikkeli.fi), or looking at the city's brochures, it can't be seen. Slogan must stand out a mile in order to create some idea of the place. It also can be used in the marketing projects of the city.

Concerning image positioning, Mikkeli positions itself as "The capital of the Finnish Lake District". I think, in this term everything is good. (Vision. [referred 25.03.2011]).

- 2) Visual symbols. As for me, the main visual symbol of Mikkeli is the Cathedral. When I was conducting the questionnaire near the Finnish Embassy, some people, looking at the picture of this cathedral on the first page, told me: "Oh! I know, this is Mikkeli!". So, it is etched in the minds of people who have ever been there. Another visual symbol is the Lake Saimaa, and its view can be seen on some brochures and websites. This visual image needs to reinforce an image argumentation of Mikkeli.
- 3) Events and deeds. As it was mentioned above, Mikkeli has several festivals and events. Mikkeli can choose one of them and with its help create city's brand and image. One example, when the event had increased city's awareness and made it known all over the world, is Opera Festival in Savonlinna. Today it is an internationally recognized festival and one of the most popular objects of cultural tourism. (Оперный фестиваль Савонлинна. [referred 20.03.2011]). Mikkeli can also use event for building its image, but it will take time and good promotion.

Thus, Mikkeli has its own unique features and can strongly compete with other cities. If it seriously applies the principles of the strategic image planning, it will build a better image than those places, which give their future to chance or inertia.

## 5.2 What kind of value could events have in the place marketing of Mikkeli?

The first part of the second research question was:

- a) What kind of demand can be found for the Mikkeli cultural events in Saint-Petersburg, Vyborg and Leningrad area?

The survey's findings show us that majority of respondents are interested in cultural events of the city during the New Year visit to Finland. "Cultural Omnivorous" has always been a feature of the Russian people. Today Russian sociologists have noted a very high social tension among the population. This is due, firstly, a certain crisis of expectations, and secondly, the internal stress. The holiday is ideal to break out from everyday life, to move away on time from the responsibilities and worries. (Гулять так гулять! [referred 22.03.2011]). Russians love to have fun; they don't like to sit at home. The New Year holiday is a time of relaxing, having fun, meeting friends. Russians love to celebrate and holidays are the constant companion of their national life. Street festivals and outdoor activities is a tradition during New Year holidays. From the findings of the present study we can see that almost all respondents are interested in outdoor events. To spend time outside with the family or friends, participate in different contests, and walk on the streets with dances, songs and talking is a pleasure for Russian people. Outdoor activities is a form of mass popular entertainment. In the 18-19 centuries in Saint-Petersburg there were arranged about 30 street festivals per year. They included representatives of all classes, as well as members of the Imperial family. (Гуляния народные. [referred 22.03.2011]). Fashion for outdoor activities is also growing in Saint-Petersburg nowadays. Outdoor performances of ballet, theatre, musicians are also become more popular year by year. (Мода на уличные гуляния и частный музей современного искусства. [referred 22.03.2011]).

According to the findings, respondents also prefer sport events during their vacations. Russia is a keen sporting country. Sport is one of the most popular activities by the Russians; it is developed and promoted in Russia. That's why they think about healthy way of life and are always ready to participate in sport events and activities, or just watch and enjoy sport games of others. (Спорт в России [referred 22.03.2011]). Based on the findings, among most preferable sports during holidays in Finland are skiing, snowboarding, ice skating, husky sledding and snowmobile riding. Ice fishing

is also interesting for the respondents. Ice fishing along with cross-country skiing took the form of a national passion. Winter fishing is associated with excellent health-improving walk. Many kilometers walking, physical work - drilling holes - in the fresh winter air has a good affect on health and mood of the person. For some Russians it has become a hobby for the whole family. (Ловля рыбы со льда. [referred 22.03.2011]).

From the findings of this study, Dance shows and New Year Balls are also popular among Russians. During these events, people can show themselves, put on pretty dresses and suits, speak with their friends, meet new people, dance and feel atmosphere of “high life”. New Year Ball has become a grand event, the most striking event among the festive New Year's events in Russia. This is not just a festive evening, it is an artistic project. (Новогодний бал в Манеже. [referred 22.03.2011]).

Based on the findings, respondents are not so interested in theatre during the New Year holidays in Finland. This is because Saint-Petersburg is very famous for its theatres. Today in Saint-Petersburg there are more than 180 theaters, the outstanding directors and actors are working there, the most fabulous and famous ballet, opera and theatrical productions of foreign and Russian classics and modern authors are put on the stage there. (Обзор театров Санкт-Петербурга. [referred 22.03.2011]). Thus, for Russians it's better to visit classical music concerts, opera or ballet in their own country than in Finland. Also, findings show us that Children's New Year concerts are not so interested for respondents. But this is understandable, because not everyone has children. Such events are interesting for those who came for their vacations with their family and children.

It's necessary to pay attention that a lot of respondents want to experience Finnish culture while being in Finland. Based on the findings of the survey, half of them can't say if they want to see Russian bands, artists, dancers during cultural events. But at the same time most of them would like to have Russian New Year traditions such as sumptuous dinner with traditional Russian food, salad “Olivier”, a lot of mandarins and champagne, hear traditional speech from Russian president and chiming clock, and see arrival of Father Frost. While other respondents want to abstract away from

Russia and everything that concerns with it, and experience only Finnish traditions and culture while being in Finland.

Also, findings show that in total there are no reasons that hinder respondents to participate in cultural activities. Those who have such reasons mention language problems, bad weather or they are just not fond of cultural and mass activities.

Thus, I can say that there is demand for cultural events. Cultural activities play a huge role in people's lives. It helps to relax and forget about everyday life. Positive emotions are never too much, that's why people go to the concerts, theatres, movies, sporting events, etc. Mikkeli can use this fact and organize cultural events in order to attract more tourists.

The second part of the second research question was:

- b) Which marketing communication channels can be proposed for promoting Mikkeli event in Saint-Petersburg, Vyborg and Leningrad area?

As it was mentioned in the theoretical framework (see e.g. Hoyle 2002, 30; Kotler et al. 1993, 148), the foundation for communication is build upon the five Ws. As it is the first axiom of promotion, let's find these 5 Ws for "Mikkeli meets Russia" event.

- 1) WHY? In order to visit the city of festivals, theatre performances, music, sport events and interesting places. To enjoy its close relationship with winter nature, amazing landscapes and uniqueness of Saimaa Lake. To take part in cultural events and get positive emotions from the holidays.
- 2) WHO? Citizens from Saint-Petersburg, Vyborg and Leningrad area.

As it was mentioned above, it is the largest target group in tourism for Finland.

- 3) WHEN? Annually, during New Year holidays.

Most of Russian people have 10 days of holidays in the beginning of January.

Most of students don't have such holidays. Usually in one week after New Year they have examinations, so during this time they are preparing for the exams. Findings of the survey corroborate this.

4) WHERE? City of Mikkeli and area nearby.

5) WHAT? New Year event that includes organized concerts, cultural and sport events, exciting competitions, excursions, exhibitions and entertainment programs. Everyone will find something to do. Nobody will be bored.

The next step is to choose the broad influence tools and deliver the event's central message. The most traditional event promotion technique is advertising.

Findings show that over half of the respondents use Internet when they are organizing their trip. It is well-known that Internet is used by more and more people all over the world, and Russia is not an exception. For place marketing, it is an information, communication and image building tool. Today, Internet is a major marketing forum for tourism. Place websites battle for the heart and minds of travelers; travelers decide where to go based on website experience; travel decisions are transacted on the web. Thus, without any doubt there should be a huge Internet advertising of "Mikkeli meets Russia" project. Firstly, it should be advertised on the official websites of the city and through banners on other websites. Print media and word-of-mouth can drive potential customers to the website of Mikkeli. The website will tell the story and pull the tourists. The website experience will play a decisive role in travel choice. (Kotler [referred 29.03.2011]).

Advertising is also should be spread through social media. Based on findings, the most popular social media among respondents is VKontakte. VKontakte (Russian: ВКОНТАКТЕ, internationally branded VK) is a Russian social network service popular in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan and increasingly in countries of Southeastern Europe. VK offers a striking similarity in design and functionality to its US rival Facebook. Like Facebook, VKontakte allows message contacts publicly or privately, create groups and events, share and tag images and video, and play browser-based

games. As of February 2011, VKontakte has around 135 million accounts. It is ranked 35 in Alexa's global Top 500 sites and is the third most visited website in Russia. (VKontakte. Today a lot of Russian companies have their pages in VKontakte, where they promote their products and services. [referred 25.03.2011]).

VKontakte can be a good marketing communication channel. Advertisers can promote their brand and services within the network – in groups, meetings and applications. Advertising in VKontakte is efficient because the message can be applied only to the audience the organization needs. There is an opportunity to explore users' profiles, their interests, then build a database of target audience and move on to the promotion. The main way of non-standard advertising VKontakte is recommendations, for example one user unobtrusively recommends to another user a particular product or service, and this information is passed along the chain. (Реклама в контакте. [referred 25.03.2011]).

Today in VKontakte there is a group dedicated to Mikkeli “Миккели ВКонтакте – VisitMikkeli.fi”. There you can find some information about Mikkeli, pictures, advices and discussions. It also has a link to visitmikkeli.fi website. In my opinion this group is well-designed but is not full and requires further improvements. It also should attract more users, as in March 2011 there were only 262 participants in the group.

“Mikkeli meets Russia” project can use VKontakte in order to promote their event. It is free and it will help to build a database of target audience, provide them with the information about the event, get their opinion, advices and suggestions.

As findings show us that about 20% of the respondents go to the Tourist agencies while organizing their trip to Finland, it makes sense to make some brochures and leaflets in the Tourist Agencies, especially in those which are located close to Finnish embassy.

Another advertising media channel that can be used for promoting “Mikkeli meets Russia” event is radio. It is low cost and used by thousands of people while being at home or standing in the traffic jam.

Direct marketing can be used through directly addressing target groups through VKontakte messages.

Sales promotion also can be used. For example, some discounts can be provided for those who make bookings prior their arrival. It will help somehow to predict approximate number of participants in “Mikkeli meets Russia” event. Findings show us that majority of respondents do their decision-making one week before their arrival or immediately after arrival. Only about 20% do it one month before their arrival.

Based on the theoretical framework (see e.g. Akkaya 2005, 236; Avraham & Ketter 2008, 60-65; Hoyle 2002, 47), Public Relations is very important and can bring very good results. Effective press release in Russian newspaper may result in editorial coverage. For example, it can be done in daily newspaper “Metro”, the audience of which is 653,5 thousands of people in Saint-Petersburg per day. It is distributed for free at 55 subway stations, as well as in the supermarkets, restaurants, cafes and business centers; and can be a good advertising media channel for promoting “Mikkeli meets Russia” event. (Metro. [referred 25.03.2011]).

Thus, success of the “Mikkeli meets Russia” event largely depends on the promotion. The right marketing communication channels are vital in creating event awareness, desire to participate and attracting investors.

To sum up, I want to say that event can be a good promotional tool of place marketing in Mikkeli. It can build a significant role in building place image. Some examples of other cities which have used events are given in the theoretical framework and findings are also proving that it also can be done in Mikkeli. Emotional contact with the audience, which is set during the event, gives a universal opportunity to influence the target audience more efficient.

### **5.3 Validity and reliability of the research**

Reliability is a statistical measure of how replicable the survey instrument data are and the explanation of its accuracy. It is present if the research has no random errors. Validity is focused on the consistency of the results. It is the best available approximation



to the truth or falsity of a given inference, proposition or conclusion of the research. (Lehmann 2009, 8; Reliability and Validity: What's the Difference? [referred 27.03.2011]).

The study is valid, because the survey questions were closely linked to the theoretical framework and were compiled with the help of Project Manager of “Mikkeli meets Russia” event. They also give an adequate answer to the problem question raised in this report. The reliability of this research is very good based on the fact that during the survey small percent of questions were not answered. This means that the respondents actually understood the questions. The questionnaire consisted of not only questions with categorical answers, but there were also open question where respondents could present their own opinions. The response rate was significant which gives more credibility to this research.

#### **5.4 Possibilities for future studies**

In general this research has proven that there is a big lack of research concerning place marketing and the events as a promotional tool of the place marketing. This area of research would be very interesting to further study by more specifically investigate how place marketing is used and how it can be met by event marketing.

I have found out some areas that could be considered for future research.

- ✓ Strategies for place improvement
- ✓ Cooperation between the place and its enterprises
- ✓ Attracting the tourism and hospitality business markets
- ✓ Attracting residents to the city of Mikkeli
- ✓ Attracting retaining, expanding and starting businesses to Mikkeli
- ✓ Cooperation between different types of businesses in the place marketing
- ✓ The role of Public-Private Partnership in place marketing
- ✓ Further development of “Mikkeli meets Russia” event
- ✓ The importance of image-based similarity in how the event is related to the city image

These topics should be studied in order to develop the city of Mikkeli, to improve the real quality of it and communicate the quality to target audience. These studies will help to improve the Finnish-Russian cooperation, service quality and competitiveness of Finnish enterprises, to obtain maximum economic benefits from the South Savo region from Russian tourists, businesses and investors.

## **6 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

This thesis was written for the city of Mikkeli and “Mikkeli meets Russia” project with the objective to understand how events can be used as a promotional tool of place marketing; evaluate the value of place marketing practices to position Mikkeli more favorably compared to its rivals; probe the interests of the potential Russian customers; and find the ways of how to attract them to visit and participate in Mikkeli events. The process of writing thesis began in November 2010 and a lot of work has been done during this process. I was able to answer the research questions and met the objective of this thesis.

The hard work during this process has been very interesting and provided me with a deeper knowledge of place and event marketing and increased skills regarding academic and scientific writing. Among challenges I met was the problem of finding appropriate literature. There was no literature on place marketing in the libraries and several times I had to buy books via internet. Another difficult thing for me was collecting data, especially near the Finnish Embassy, where I was met by sullen people. But, anyway, it was a good experience for me. If something could be done differently, in addition to the survey I would have arranged some interviews with the heads of Mikkeli in order to get better evaluation of the city image and finding the ways of improving it.

The event can be a good promotional tool for building an attractive image of Mikkeli. But in order to promote the city with the event, we need to promote the event. This thesis has shown how it can be promoted, which marketing communication channels can be used and how attractiveness and awareness of Mikkeli can be improved.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1 Questionnaire “Mikkeli meets Russia”**

Hello!

This questionnaire was made by the student of Mikkeli University of Applied Science, Shishenina Anna, in order to investigate the interest in cultural events held in Finland of citizens from St. Petersburg, Vyborg, Leningrad area. The information you provide will be used exclusively for research purposes. And the results will help to improve the cultural and tourism programs.

Completion of this questionnaire takes you less than 10 minutes. I really appreciate your time and thank you for your cooperation!

**1) Gender:**

- Male
- Female

**2) Age:**

- Under 18
- 19-24
- 25-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- >51

**3) Marital status:**

- Married
- Single
- Divorced
- In the relationships

**4) Occupation:**

- student
- employed



- entrepreneur
- pensioner
- unemployed
- housewife

**5) To which Nordic or Scandinavian countries are you interested to travel?**

- Finland
- Sweden
- Norway
- Denmark
- Iceland
- I prefer another destinations

**6) Do you travel to Finland or planning to travel in the nearest future?**

- Yes, I travel to Finland
- I do not usually travel there, but I am planning to travel to Finland
- No I do not travel and I am not planning to travel there.

**7) If you travel to Finland , how often do you do this?**

- > 4 times per year
- 3-4 times per year
- 1-2 times per year
- Rarely
- I have never been there

**8) Who do you usually travel with?**

- Alone
- Boyfriend/Girlfriend
- Friends
- Family

**9) Which Finnish cities are more interesting to you?**

- Helsinki

- Lappeenranta
- Mikkeli
- Tampere
- Imatra
- Yyvaskyla
- Lahti
- Turkuu
- Espoo
- Other, please specify

**10) Have you heard anything about Mikkeli?**

- Yes, I was there
- Yes, I have heard about it from my friends/ relatives/ colleagues
- No, I have never heard about this city

**11) If you have heard about Mikkeli, select from following:**

- I have friends there
- I am/was studying there
- I was passing through this city
- I had holidays there
- I went there for shopping
- Other, please specify

**12) How do usually go (or would like to go) to Finland?**

- by car
- by bus
- by train
- by plane

**13) Where would like to stay in Finland?**

- In the hotel
- In the cottage
- At the friends' / relative's apartment

- Other, please specify

**14) In which way do you prefer to organize your trip to Finland?**

- I book everything via the Internet
- I go to the Tourist Agencies
- I book everything after my arrival to Finland
- Other, please specify

**15) Which information sources do you use or would like to use during your vocations?**

- Internet
- Tourist guides
- Travel agencies
- Friend's/ relative's advices
- Information in the hotel
- Other, please specify

**16) Which social media services do you use?**

- V Kontakte
- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Blogger
- My space
- You Tube
- Other, please specify
- I don't use it

**17) What do you think about spending New Year holidays in Finland?**

- I would like to spend my New Year holidays in Finland
- I prefer to stay in Russia
- I would like to go to another country

**18) How do you prefer to spend your time during New Year holidays in Finland, what would you like to see or visit? Please place your interest in the pastime on a five point scale.**

	NO, IT'S NOT FOR ME	I DOUBT WHETHER I WILL GO	I CAN'T SAY	I WOULD LIKE TO GO	I WILL GO FOR SURE
CHURCH, CASTLE, FORTRESS, EXCURSIONS	1	2	3	4	5
MUSEUM OR ART EXHIBITION	1	2	3	4	5
THEATRE	1	2	3	4	5
ROCK MUSIC FESTIVAL	1	2	3	4	5
OPERA OR BALLET	1	2	3	4	5
AMUSEMENT OR THEME PARK	1	2	3	4	5
SPA	1	2	3	4	5
SPORT	1	2	3	4	5
SHOPPING	1	2	3	4	5
NIGHT CLUBS	1	2	3	4	5

**19) Are you interested in any cultural events of the city during your New Year visit in Finland?**

- Yes
- No

**20) Which of the following cultural events are interesting for you and what you would like to visit during the New Year holidays? Please place your interest in the pastime on a five point scale.**

	NO, IT'S NOT FOR ME	I DOUBT WHETHER I WILL GO	I CAN'T SAY	I WOULD LIKE TO GO	I WILL GO FOR SURE
OUTDOOR EVENTS	1	2	3	4	5
CHILDREN'S NEW YEAR CONCERT	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSICAL MUSIC CONCERTS	1	2	3	4	5

THEATRE OR MUSICALS	1	2	3	4	5
NEW YEAR BALL	1	2	3	4	5
DANCE SHOW	1	2	3	4	5
SPORT EVENTS	1	2	3	4	5

**21) Which cultural events would you like to add to the list above?** \_\_\_\_\_

**22) Which kinds of winter sports and outdoor activities do you prefer doing during winter holidays in Finland?**

- Skiing
- Snowboarding
- Ice-skating
- Husky sledding
- Snowmobile
- Slalom skiing
- Snowshoe trekking
- Ice fishing
- Other, please specify
- I don't enjoy doing sports during my vacations.

**23) When do you usually decide which events and cultural activities you will visit?**

- Prior to my arrival, one month before
- Prior to my arrival, one week before
- Immediately after my arrival
- Few hours prior to the activity or event

**24) Would you like to see Russian bands, artists, dancers during cultural events in Finland?**

- Yes, I would like to
- No, I prefer to experience Finnish culture better while being in Finland (*Please, specify what kind of Finnish culture*)
- I can't say

**25) Which Russian New Year traditions would you like to find during your vacation in Finland?**

- to have sumptuous dinner with traditional Russian food and champagne
- to hear traditional New Year speech from Russian president and chiming clock
- to see the arrival of Ded Moroz (Father Frost) and his granddaughter Snegurochka (Snow Maiden)
- to hear traditional Russian New Year's music
- other, please specify

**26) In which items are you interested during your shopping?**

- Clothes
- Shoes
- Food
- Souvenirs and presents
- Household issues
- Other, please specify
- I am not interested in shopping

**27) How many days would you like to stay in Finland during your New Year holidays?\_\_\_\_\_**

**28) How much do you plan to spend per person during your New Year holidays?**

- <5000 rubles
- 5000-10000 rubles
- 10000-20000 rubles
- 20000-30000 rubles
- >30000 rubles

**29) Is there some specific reason that hinders you to travel to Finland for New Year?\_\_\_\_\_**

**30) Is there some reason that hinders you to participate in cultural activities?\_\_\_\_\_**

## Appendix 2 Опросник “Mikkeli meets Russia”

*Здравствуйте!*

*Этот опросник был составлен учащейся Университета Прикладных Наук г. Миккели, Шишениной Анной, с целью исследования интереса жителей Санкт-Петербурга, Ленинградской области и Выборга в культурных мероприятиях, проводимых на территории Финляндии. Предоставленная Вами информация будет использована исключительно в исследовательских целях. А полученные результаты помогут улучшить культурные и туристические программы. Заполнение данного опросника отнимет у Вас не более 10 минут. Я очень ценю*

*Ваше время и благодарю за сотрудничество!*

*Спасибо!*

**1) Ваш пол:**

- Женский
- Мужской

**2) Ваш возраст:**

- <18
- 18-24
- 25-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- >51

**3) Семейное положение:**

- Женат/замужем
- Не женат/ не замужем
- Разведен
- В отношениях

**4) Род занятий:**

- Студент/ учащийся
- Полная/частичная занятость
- Частный предприниматель
- Пенсионер
- Безработный
- Домохозяйка

**5) Какие страны Скандинавии Вам наиболее интересны?**

- Финляндия
- Швеция
- Норвегия
- Дания
- Исландия
- Я предпочитаю другие регионы

**6) Ездите ли вы в Финляндию или собираетесь совершить такую поездку?**

- Да, я посещаю Финляндию
- Я еще не был там ни разу, но хотел бы посетить эту страну
- Нет, я не планирую такой поездки

**7) Если Вы ездите в Финляндию, как часто Вы совершаете такие поездки?**

- > 4 раза в год
- 3-4 раза в год
- 1-2 раза в год
- Реже
- Я никогда там не был

**8) С кем вы обычно путешествуете?**

- Один
- С молодым человеком/девушкой
- С друзьями
- С семьей

**9) Какие финские города Вам наиболее интересны?**

- Хельсинки
- Лаппеенранта
- Миккели
- Тампере
- Иматра
- Ювяскюля
- Лахти
- Турку
- Эспо
- Другое, уточните

**10) Слышали ли Вы что-нибудь о финском городе Миккели?**

- Да, я был там
- Да, я слышал об этом городе от друзей/ родственников/ коллег



- Нет, я никогда не слышал про этот город

**11) Если Вы бывали в Миккели, то по какой причине?**

- У меня там друзья
- Я учусь/учился там
- Я был там проездом
- Я был там на праздниках
- Я ездил туда за покупками
- Другое, уточните

**12) Каким видом транспорта Вы добираетесь (или предпочли бы) до Финляндии?**

- На машине
- На автобусе
- На поезде
- На самолете

**13) Где бы Вы остановились в Финляндии?**

- В отеле
- В коттедже
- У друзей/ родственников
- Другое, уточните

**14) Как вы организовываете свою поездку в Финляндию?**

- Бронирую все через интернет
- Иду в Туристическое агентство
- Бронирую все по приезду в Финляндию
- Другое, укажите

**15) Какие информационные ресурсы Вы используете во время своих каникул/ отпуска?**

- Интернет
- Путеводитель
- Туристическое агентство
- Советы друзей/знакомых
- Информация в отеле
- Другое, укажите

**16) Какие социальные сети Вы обычно используете?**

- Vkontakte
- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn

- Blogger
- My space
- You Tube
- Другое, уточните
- Никакие

**17) Рассматриваете ли Вы возможность проведения Новогодних праздников в Финляндии?**

- Я бы хотел провести Новогодние праздники в Финляндии
- Я предпочитаю остаться в России
- Я бы предпочел поехать в другую страну

**18) Какое времяпровождение Вы бы предпочли во время новогодних каникул/ отпуска в Финляндии, что бы Вы хотели увидеть или посетить? Пожалуйста, расположите Ваш интерес к нижеперечисленному времяпровождению по пятибалльной шкале.**

	НЕТ, ЭТО НЕ ДЛЯ МЕНЯ	ДУМАЮ, НЕ ПОЙДУ	ЗАТРУДНЯЮСЬ ОТВЕТИТЬ	ДУМАЮ, СТОИТ СХОДИТЬ	ОБЯЗАТЕЛЬНО ПОЙДУ
ЦЕРКОВЬ, СОБОР, КРЕПОСТЬ	1	2	3	4	5
МУЗЕИ, ВЫСТАВКИ, ЭКСКУРСИИ	1	2	3	4	5
ТЕАТР	1	2	3	4	5
РОК ФЕСТИВАЛЬ	1	2	3	4	5
ОПЕРА ИЛИ БАЛЕТ	1	2	3	4	5
ПАРК РАЗВЛЕЧЕНИЯ/ ПАРК АТТРАКЦИОНОВ	1	2	3	4	5
СПА	1	2	3	4	5
СПОРТ	1	2	3	4	5
ШОПИНГ	1	2	3	4	5
НОЧНЫЕ КЛУБЫ	1	2	3	4	5

**19) Хотели бы Вы посетить какие-либо культурные мероприятия во время Новогодних каникул/отпуска в Финляндии?**

- Да
- Нет

**20) Какие из нижеперечисленных культурных мероприятий интересны Вам и что Вы бы хотели посетить во время Новогодних каникул/ отпуска в Финляндии? Пожалуйста, укажите Ваш интерес к мероприятиям по пятибалльной шкале.**

	НЕТ, ЭТО НЕ ДЛЯ МЕНЯ	ДУМАЮ, НЕ ПОЙДУ	ЗАТРУДНЯЮСЬ ОТВЕТИТЬ	ДУМАЮ, СТОИТ СХОДИТЬ	ОБЯЗАТЕЛЬНО ПОЙДУ
УЛИЧНЫЕ ГУЛЯНИЯ	1	2	3	4	5
НОВОГОДНИЙ КОНЦЕРТ ДЛЯ ДЕТЕЙ	1	2	3	4	5
КОНЦЕРТ КЛАССИЧЕСКОЙ МУЗЫКИ	1	2	3	4	5
ТЕАТР ИЛИ МЮЗИКЛ	1	2	3	4	5
НОВОГОДНИЙ БАЛ	1	2	3	4	5
ТАНЦЕВАЛЬНОЕ ШОУ	1	2	3	4	5
СПОРТИВНЫЕ МЕРОПРИЯТИЯ	1	2	3	4	5

**21) Какие культурные мероприятия Вы бы еще добавили в выше-перечисленный список? \_\_\_\_\_**

**22) Какие зимние виды спорта и уличные гуляния Вы предпочли бы во время Новогодних каникул/ отпуска в Финляндии?**

- Катание на горных лыжах
- Катание на сноуборде
- Катание на коньках
- Катание на салазках
- Катание на снегоходах
- Слалом
- Ходьба на снегоступах
- Зимняя рыбалка
- Другое, уточните
- Я не любитель спорта или подобных мероприятий

**23) Когда Вы принимаете решение, какие события или культурные мероприятия Вы посетите?**

- За один месяц до своего приезда
- За одну неделю до своего приезда
- Сразу же после приезда
- За несколько часов до мероприятия или события

**24) Хотели бы Вы увидеть русских артистов, танцоров, музыкальные группы во время Ваших Новогодних каникул/ отпуска в Финляндии?**

- Да
- Затрудняюсь ответить

- Нет, предпочитаю познавать финскую культуру. (Пожалуйста, уточните)

**25) Какие русские Новогодние традиции Вы бы хотели увидеть во время Ваших каникул/ отпуска в Финляндии?**

- Шикарный ужин с традиционной русской едой и шампанским
- Услышать традиционную Новогоднюю речь президента России и бой курантов
- Встретить Деда Мороза и Снегурочку
- Услышать традиционную русскую Новогоднюю музыку
- Другое, укажите

**26) Что Вы предпочитаете или предпочли бы купить во время каникул/ отпуска в Финляндии?**

- Одежду
- Обувь
- Еду
- Сувениры и подарки
- Домашние принадлежности
- Услуги
- Другое, уточните
- Я не заинтересован в шопинге

**27) Сколько дней Вы бы предпочли провести в Финляндии во время Новогодних каникул/ отпуска? \_\_\_\_\_**

**28) Сколько Вы планируете потратить на одного человека во время Новогодних каникул/ отпуска?**

- < 5000 рублей
- 5000 – 10000 рублей
- 10000 – 20000 рублей
- 20000 – 30000 рублей
- >30000 рублей

**29) Существуют ли какие-либо причины, которые мешают Вам отметить Новый год в Финляндии? \_\_\_\_\_**

**30) Существуют ли какие-либо причины, из-за которых Вы бы не хотели участвовать в культурных мероприятиях в Финляндии? \_\_\_\_\_**

***Спасибо за Ваше участие!***